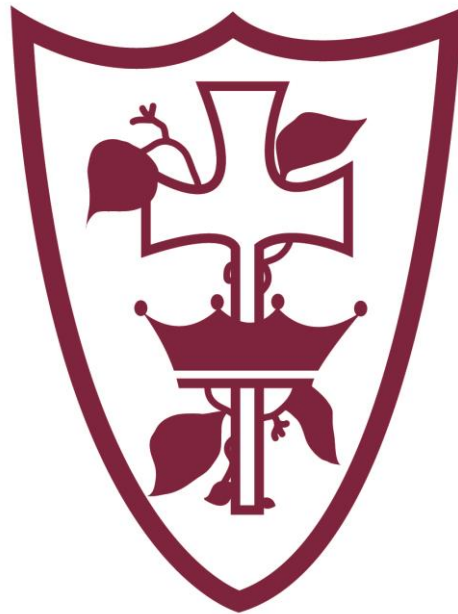


**St. Martha**  
**Catholic School**



**PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2016 - 2017**

**2411 Oak Shores**  
**Kingwood, Texas 77339**

**281-358-5523**  
**281-358-5526 (Fax)**  
**[www.stmarthacs.org](http://www.stmarthacs.org)**



***Please review the SMCS Parent-Student Handbook at [www.stmarthacs.org](http://www.stmarthacs.org) under the Documents section***

***Please return this page to the school office  
by Tuesday, September 6, 2016.***

---

*Family Name (please print)*

**Parental Acknowledgement Form  
Parent-Student Handbook**

Please sign, date and return this acknowledgement form to your oldest student's teacher. Your signature indicates that you have read the SMCS 2016-2017 Parent-Student Handbook. It also means that you have discussed with your student(s) the appropriate items from the handbook, and that you all agree to abide by the school procedures, regulations and policies discussed in the handbook.

St. Martha Catholic School administration retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if any changes are made. In the event revisions are made to this handbook, an acknowledgement form will be sent home to each family. The acknowledgement form must be signed and returned to the school office by the indicated date. If this acknowledgement form is not signed and returned, the revised policies are still in effect for you and your student(s), and the principal retains the right to enforce consequences per the revised handbook.

---

Signature of Parent\*

Date

---

Name of Parent\*

**\* For the purposes of this handbook, school forms and documents, the term "parent" represents all parents, legal guardians and legal custodians.**

**ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL**  
**PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2016-2017**

Accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, St. Martha Catholic School fulfills state requirements, is published in the Texas School Directory for accredited schools, and is a member of the National Catholic Education Association and the Texas Association for Non-Public Schools.

All schools adhere to the Archdiocesan Board of Education Policy 652.1 regarding non-discrimination that states “the Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. They shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission, loan, athletic, or scholarship programs.”

**Rev. Monsignor Chester Borski, STL, Pastor**

**Mrs. Tina Lewis, Principal**

**St. Martha Local Advisory Board**

Jacyln Dement

Susan Gentile

Mark Jeansonne

Deirdre Keeler

Nick Landry

Elisa Loper

Jan Maly

Jacqueline Morris

Robert Vara

The Local Advisory Board meets the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the school library or parish administration building. The board meetings are open to all school parents. See additional information on the Local Advisory Board on page 40.

Index

Mission of St. Martha Catholic School .....	7
Philosophy of St. Martha Catholic School .....	7
Goals and Objectives of St. Martha Catholic School .....	7
Academic .....	10
Attendance Policy.....	10
Tardiness .....	11
Homework .....	11
Textbooks .....	11
Student Evaluation .....	12
Electronic Grading System .....	13
Special Needs Learners and Referrals.....	13
Quarterly A/B Honor Roll .....	15
Year-End Honor Roll .....	15
Standardized Testing .....	15
Promotion and Retention .....	15
Records .....	16
Admission .....	8
Admission Policy .....	8
Order of Admission .....	8
Enrollment Procedures .....	8
Before and After School Program .....	39
Program Options and Fees .....	39
Financial Policy .....	40
Calendar .....	44
Classroom Discipline .....	25
Counseling Support Services.....	38
Emergency Procedures .....	36
Flooding .....	36
Emergency School Closing .....	36
Emergency Dismissal .....	36
Inclement Weather Procedure .....	36
Extracurricular Activities .....	37
Eligibility .....	37
Games and Events.....	37
Athletic Handbook .....	38
Field Trips .....	36
Financial .....	9
Tuition .....	9
Delinquent Accounts .....	9
Student Withdrawal .....	10
Health and Safety .....	32
Clinic Policies .....	32
Dental and Eye Appointments .....	33
Serious Chronic Illnesses .....	33
Immunization .....	33
Immunization Requirements .....	34
Medication in the School .....	34
Health Screenings .....	35
Medical Emergencies .....	35

Pandemic Flu .....	35
Student Abuse and Neglect .....	35
Insurance .....	35
Aerosol Products .....	35
No-Smoking Policy.....	35
Asbestos .....	35
No Animals Policy .....	36
Hours, Arrival and Dismissal .....	16
School and Access Hours .....	16
Release of Students .....	17
Park and Walk Arrival and Dismissal .....	17
Car Line Arrival and Dismissal .....	17
Arrival/Dismissal from Campus Unaccompanied .....	17
Changes in Dismissal Plans .....	17
Early Dismissal .....	18
Late Pickup for Students .....	18
Rainy Day Arrival and Dismissal .....	18
Impairment of Parent at Release .....	18
Local Advisory Board .....	40
Lunch Program and Visitor Policy.....	38
Procedures and Regulations.....	18
Visitors to Campus.....	18
Classroom Visits .....	19
Conferences .....	19
Parental Communication of Concerns .....	19
Parent/Student Complaint Process .....	19
Statement of Nondiscrimination .....	19
School Parties, Events and Food Policies.....	19
Student Use of Telephone .....	20
Forgotten Items .....	20
Deliveries .....	20
Lost and Found .....	20
Lockers .....	20
Backpacks .....	20
Reading Material .....	21
Change of Clothes .....	21
Standard of Conduct .....	25
School-Wide Code of Conduct .....	26
Parent Conduct .....	29
Academic Misconduct .....	29
Cheating .....	29
Fabrication or Falsification .....	29
Plagiarism .....	30
Discipline Code .....	30
Disciplinary Probation .....	30
Suspension .....	31
Major Offenses .....	31
Expulsion .....	31
Archdiocesan Policy – Use of Controlled Substances .....	32
Guns and Weapons .....	32
Sexual Harassment .....	32

Technology Acceptable Use Policy Statement.....	42
Internet .....	43
Expectations for Student’s Behavior.....	43
Rules of Appropriate Use .....	43
Technology User Agreement and Parent Permission Form .....	45
Uniforms/Dress Code .....	21
Dress Code Policies .....	22
Uniforms (Formal and Daily).....	22
Shoes for PreK – Grade 8 .....	24
Outerwear Options .....	24
Liturgical Celebrations.....	24
Spirit Day .....	24
Free Dress Day .....	24
T-Shirt Tuesday .....	25
P.E. Uniforms .....	25
Use of School Logos .....	42
VIRTUS Training Requirement .....	42
Volunteers .....	41
PLUS Volunteers .....	41

## **ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

*The Mission of St. Martha Catholic School is to provide a quality education sharing in the total Catholic formation of each person by developing mind, heart and spirit.*

### **ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

**We acknowledge** that parents are the primary educators of their students. Through collaborative efforts between the home, school, and parish communities, a positive atmosphere is created for each student to grow with the Gospel messages. The core purpose is the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical development of our students.

**We believe** that as members of an integral ministry of the faith community of St. Martha Catholic Parish, learners follow religious truths and live Catholic values and ethics. St. Martha Catholic School promotes a setting “Where Faith and Knowledge Meet” as students develop a personal relationship with Christ and come to know Him as their Model.

**We believe** that a solid foundation of educational skills following the Archdiocesan curriculum provides educational and spiritual experiences for students to grow and become successful, active, lifelong learners. The learning environment emphasizes the importance of self-confidence, respect, self-discipline, and responsibility as each person cultivates God’s gifts of mind, heart, and spirit.

**We believe** that an educational program within an ordered, safe, caring and disciplined environment, based on Catholic teachings and values, enables each student to grow in better understanding of self in relationship to God and others. Students are then encouraged to go beyond self and become aware of the needs of others as Jesus did and learn to serve in the larger community.

### **ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL GOALS**

- We will provide our students a religious atmosphere that reflects the Church’s mission and permeates throughout the instructional program.
- We will build on our students’ personal strengths and moral values while expecting them to be responsible, responsive and truthful individuals.
- We will strive for academic excellence in all grade levels by helping each student to reach his/her full potential.
- We will teach students to be respectful, compassionate and empathetic to the feelings and needs of others as well as develop an understanding of cultural diversity.
- We will create a safe environment for our students and promote an understanding of physical and mental wellness.

### **ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL OBJECTIVES**

In accordance with our philosophy, St. Martha Catholic School must guide each student to realize specific objectives as an aid in achieving his/her potential and goals. The objectives are as follows:

- To teach students the message of Christ and to help students develop a spirit of prayer and worship through religious education
- To model and instill a respect for the rights of others as individuals and to cultivate moral and spiritual values, ethical standards of conduct and basic integrity
- To facilitate each student’s ability to think constructively, to solve problems, to reason independently and to accept responsibility for self-evaluation and self-instruction
- To provide for all students educational opportunities and meaningful learning experiences related to their heritage, American citizenship and responsibilities to our community and the global society
- To impart knowledge and the importance of physical and mental health by developing healthy attitudes towards physical education, nutrition and health maintenance skills

Hence, through our curriculum at St. Martha Catholic School, we strive to empower students to be critical thinkers, eager learners and seekers of intellectual challenge, and to develop a Christian spirit to prepare them to fulfill their future responsibilities in life.

## ADMISSION

### Admission Policy

The Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston admit all students to the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to the student body. They shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, national or ethnic origin in the administration of their admission, athletic or scholarship programs.

Admission to St. Martha Catholic School is based on the availability of space and resources as well as the developmental, scholastic and behavioral qualifications of the applicant.

Due to funding limitations, some resources required to meet student needs may not be available. Therefore, our school will not be able to meet the needs of some students.

The admission process generally begins in late January or early February. Currently enrolled students are required to turn in the registration forms, which are distributed through the main office. ***To secure a student's grade level placement, the registration forms accompanied by the non-refundable registration fees must be turned in by the designated deadline. Specific teacher requests will not be honored.***

New students will be required to complete an application packet. Upon administrative approval, registration forms will need to be completed. These forms should be filled out completely, signed, and returned by the appropriate date. Applications are accepted on a first-come basis. New applicants for Grades 1 – 7 will be required to successfully pass an admission test. Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students new to St. Martha Catholic School will be required to complete a Pre-Kindergarten Screening for entrance into 3K or 4K or a Kindergarten Readiness Assessment to qualify for entrance to Kindergarten.

If the 8th grade class is not at capacity, students may be accepted *only if* transferring from another Catholic School due to relocation and

- 1) are in good standing with the prior school,
- 2) are academically passing,
- 3) have no discipline concerns, and
- 4) have successfully passed admission test.

*Admission will not be allowed for students of families who have outstanding tuition and fees from St. Martha or any other school.*

### Order of Admission

The registration process will proceed according to the following order of admission:

- Currently enrolled students
- Siblings of currently enrolled students
- St. Martha Mother's Day Out students
- Children of parishioners of St. Martha Catholic Church
- Catholic children from other parishes
- All other

### Enrollment Procedures

1. Students must meet the age requirement as outlined by the Archdiocese and the State of Texas: five years old on or before September 1 in order to enter Kindergarten and six years old on or before September 1 to enter first grade. The student's original birth certificate must be presented for proof of age.
2. Students entering a Pre-Kindergarten class must be three or four years old respectively on or before September 1 and fully potty trained.
3. It is the policy of St. Martha Catholic School that the principal has the authority to accept or refuse admittance of any individual as a student. This decision is based on the Archdiocesan policies for admittance, date of application, the information received from the applicant at the time the application for admittance is made and the ability of St. Martha Catholic School to meet the needs of the student.



4. All new students who have successfully passed the admission test and have been accepted will be on a probationary basis for a period of nine weeks. Any concerns that arise may be addressed during the probationary period. Should the probationary period need to be extended for any reason, the administration will contact the parents and provide an explanation regarding the reasons for extending the probationary period. If the probationary period ends and the student is not accepted, a refund of any pre-paid tuition will be issued; however, registration fees will not be refunded.
5. The following documents must be provided before enrollment is complete: application, release of information form, original birth certificate, baptismal certificate (if applicable), academic records (including standardized testing), social security card, health records, special needs disclosure for and required immigration documents (foreign students only).
6. A complete immunization record validated by a U.S. physician is required at the time of registration. Archdiocesan policy requires all new students present written evidence of TB testing and the results. All students must be in compliance with the immunization requirements of the Texas Department of Health, Immunization Division.

Exemptions: St. Martha Catholic School follows the exemptions for medical reasons allowed by the State of Texas:

To claim an exclusion for medical reasons, the student(s) must present a statement signed by the student's physician (M.D. or D.O.), duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States, who has examined the student, in which it is stated that in the physician's opinion, the vaccine required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only **one** year from the date signed by the physician.

## **FINANCIAL**

### **Tuition**

It is the parents' financial obligation to support the school by paying tuition on the first day of each month. Payments will begin August 1 and end on May 1. If payment is not received in the office by the tenth (10th) day of each month, a late fee of \$25 will be assessed for that month. Monthly tuition statements/invoices will not be sent.

Tuition payments are to be made directly to the school office. *Do not* send tuition payments to the classroom teacher. The school has ACH capabilities for automatic payments by parents. Forms may be obtained from the school's business office. Tuition may be paid by check, cashiers check, money order or ACH bank drafts. Cash is not accepted in the school office.

The oldest student will be charged the full tuition rate. The second and third siblings will receive a 20 percent discount. Any additional siblings will receive a 30 percent discount.

Tuition for new students, whose start date is between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, will be at their regular monthly tuition rate.

Tuition for new students, whose start date is between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the last day of the month, will be prorated at 50 percent of their monthly tuition rate.

If a student, with approval from the registrar, increases or decreases the number of days enrolled in a Pre-Kindergarten class, the tuition of the student will remain the same for that calendar month.

### **Delinquent Accounts**

Timely payment of tuition and all school fees, in accordance with the school agreement, is important to the operating budget of the School. The following procedures relating to delinquent accounts are in effect for the parent with unpaid financial obligations to the school:

- St. Martha Catholic School will retain all records, including records of student performance (i.e. report cards, progress reports), and will not certify student advancement or transfer until the account is paid in full.

- If progress reports are withheld, parents and students are still required to attend fall and spring Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences to discuss student progress; official grades will not be presented at that time. If tuition payments or other school accounts are delinquent, the students' grades will be blocked from the **electronic** grading system. **Please allow five school days to unblock the electronic grading account.**
- St. Martha Catholic School reserves the right to prohibit students from taking final exams if tuition or other school fees are delinquent.
- If tuition payments are not received by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month, students of families with delinquent accounts may not be admitted to school.
- If there are recurrent problems with tuition collection, acceptance of registration for the next school year will be conditional on approval of the principal and pastor and may be contingent upon payment of tuition and fees in advance and in full. *In addition student records and report cards may be held until all checks have cleared the bank the month following the close of the school year.*
- After the second month of late account balances, the family will be required to pay monthly tuition by automatic bank draft.
- There is a \$25 charge for checks returned or bank drafts denied due to insufficient funds. Subsequent to a returned check or denied bank draft, future payments must be paid by cashier's check or money order.
- Students of families with delinquent payments will be not permitted to participate in promotion ceremonies.
- Unpaid balances as of June 13, 2017, will be settled by utilizing the registration and supply fees from 2016-2017 school year. If this occurs, the student(s) of families with unpaid balances will not be considered registered for 2015-2017 school year, and therefore will not be placed on class list(s).

### **Student Withdrawal**

Report cards and other student records will not be provided for a student who has withdrawn until all financial obligations to the school are paid in full.

When the new school requests records, the registrar will send copies of transcripts and the permanent record card only if release forms have been completed and returned to the registrar.

***There will be no refund of monthly tuition if a student withdrawal occurs after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.***

## **ACADEMIC**

### **Attendance Policy**

In compliance with the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, schools are in session 180 days each year. Parents are expected to honor the published school calendar. It is strongly recommended to schedule medical appointments and vacations outside of school hours. If it is absolutely necessary for parents to remove a student from classes for reasons other than family emergencies or illness, a written request should be submitted to the principal indicating the reason for the absence and the number of days the student will be absent.

St. Martha Catholic School uses the compulsory attendance laws for Texas schools as a guide. St. Martha Catholic School requires that students be in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days classes are in session. Excessive absences of 18 days or more may affect student promotion and/or re-enrollment for the following year. Cases are reviewed on an individual basis. In addition, ten or more absences during a semester are considered excessive and may result in the student having to attend remedial classes during the summer or repeating the current grade level.

If a parent chooses not to send a student on a field trip, the student will be counted as absent and must stay home with the parent; this includes Camp Kappe and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip. The parent must provide a written note to the school stating the student will not attend the field trip. If the student is not able to attend a field trip due to medical reasons, a note from the student's primary care physician stating the specific medical restrictions must be submitted to the school nurse at least four days prior to the field trip. Once verification is completed by the school nurse, the student will be permitted to attend school in a lower grade and will need to complete assignments prepared by the homeroom teacher. Field trips are scheduled for educational purposes and fulfill the learning objectives of the curriculum. If a student is not permitted to go on a field trip by the school, the student should come to school, and the school will place the student in another class for the length of the field trip.

Parents are required to contact the school office by 9 a.m. on the day of an absence or in advance if known. Calls made by students are not acceptable. When a student is absent from school for any reason, a written excuse signed by the parent stating why the student was absent must be sent to the student's teacher the day the student returns to class. Please indicate the date(s) of absence(s), student name and reason for the absence. When a student's absence for illness exceeds five cumulative days, a statement from a physician verifying the illness or condition requiring the student's extended absence from school is needed. If a student has established a questionable pattern of absences, a physician's statement may be required after a single day's absence to clarify the absence as one for which there are extenuating circumstances.

***Students not in attendance at 10:00 a.m., or leaving the school prior to 10:00 a.m. for the remainder of the day, will be counted as absent for the day. After ten (10) absences annually, a student will no longer be eligible for the Golden Crusader, "A" Honor Roll and the Academic Excellence Award (for 8<sup>th</sup> grade only).***

### **Tardiness**

Students entering the school building after 8:00 a.m. will be required to be signed in by their parents and obtain a pass to enter class. All late arrivals are recorded in the office log and become a part of the student's permanent attendance record. When the bell rings at 8:00 a.m., students who are not in their homeroom classrooms are considered tardy and students must report to the school office to obtain a tardy pass.

Parents must come into the school office and sign in the student when they are tardy or returning from a doctor's appointment. Please do not drop the student off in the parking lot.

### **Homework**

Homework assignments reinforce skills taught in the classroom, foster habits of independent study and meet growth needs of the individual student.

The following timetable is a suggested total allotment *per day* for homework assignments.

Grades 1-2	30 minutes
Grades 3-4	45 minutes
Grades 5-6	60 minutes
Grades 7-8	90 minutes

Beginning on the third day of an absence, homework and class work assignments for absent students will be made available to the parent. The parent may call in to the office by 10:00 a.m. on the third day to request assignments. All students who are absent less than three (3) days will request their assignments from their teachers when they return to school.

***Students are required to complete all class work and homework missed during any absence.*** Students will be given one day for every day absent not counting the day they return to school to complete any missed assignments or tests.

Recreational trips or vacations taken during regularly scheduled school days are strongly discouraged. Absences from classes due to trips or vacations are considered unexcused. School work will not be sent with students who leave for vacations or other absences during the year. ***All school work will need to be completed upon return from the extended absence per the prescribed timetable set by the student's teachers. If the work is not made up according to the timetable, the student will earn a zero for incomplete work.***

Please make vacation plans around the school calendar.

### **Textbooks**

Textbooks used at St. Martha Catholic School are on the approved Archdiocesan textbook list.

The student is responsible for the care and safety of his/her textbooks, which are school property. ***Books are to be covered at all times.*** If books are abused or lost, fees will be assessed to cover the loss.

**Student Evaluation**

Student progress may be communicated to parents through scheduled parent conferences, telephone calls, progress reports, assignment books, weekly work folders, and report cards. Parents are encouraged to confer with teachers regularly regarding the growth and development of their child(ren). Appointments for conferences are necessary and should be made directly with the teacher during school hours. This can be done by exchanging notes, emailing the teacher, or by calling the school office and requesting a return phone call from the teacher.

Communication between parents and teachers is vitally important in the educational process. Please do not hesitate to call the school or write a note to the teacher. **Please do not contact teachers at their homes or on their personal cellular phones.** Parent-Teacher-Student conferences are held twice a year to communicate student progress. These conferences provide the opportunity to discuss and explore various aspects of the student's growth and development. Students must be present for conferences since learning is ultimately the responsibility of the student and the conference dates are counted as a student school day. Attendance is taken by the teacher and turned into the office as an official school day.

Grades are given to each student for every subject every nine weeks. Any grade below 70 is recorded on the report card as failing. Grades 70 or above are passing grades.

In Grades 6-8, semester exams will be given and averaged as a major part of the student grade for mid-semester and final averages. Please refer to the school calendar for the dates, times, and exam schedule.

Student achievement is determined by the quality of class work, class participation, homework, and assessments. Each teacher has a grading policy unique to his or her class and subject matter. Please refer to handouts received at orientation for a full understanding of these policies.

Progress reports are issued between grading periods (at four and one-half weeks), and report cards are issued every nine weeks for Grades 1-8.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten progress reports/report cards are issued starting with the second quarter marking period. Progress for the first quarter will be discussed verbally at the fall Parent-Teacher-Student Conference.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten Marking Code:

S	Satisfactory:	Goal Achieved
T	Transition:	Student is in process of learning
NA	Needs Attention:	Student is not able to complete goal

**Grades 1-8 Academic Marking Code on report cards is:**

93-100	A
86-92	B
78-85	C
70-77	D
0-69	F

Numerical grades will be given in all core subjects on report cards:

- Core Subjects Grades 1-3: Religion, Reading, English, Spelling, Mathematics
- Core Subjects Grades 4-5: Religion, Reading, English, Spelling, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science
- Core Subjects Grades 6-8: All subjects are considered core subjects.

The following designated evaluation code is to be used for all other subjects and conduct in Grades 1-8.

E	Excellent	93-100
S	Satisfactory	86-92
N	Needs Improvement	78-85
U	Unsatisfactory	0-77

### **Electronic Grading System**

Each family will be given an access code for the electronic grading system for each student. In case of separate parental households, an additional access code may be given per student. As with all accounts, access will be blocked for unpaid financial obligations for the parent in arrears.

### **Special Needs Learners and Referrals**

Consistent with the contents of the Church document, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, and the Pastoral Statement of the U.S. Bishops, *Persons with Disabilities*, the Archdiocese seeks to include students with special needs in our schools to the extent that the need of such students can be met within the scope of the programs and resources offered. The Catholic Schools Office is aware that it is unrealistic to serve all categories of special needs students. However, St. Martha Catholic School and the other Catholic schools are cognizant of the fact that admission of special needs students must be considered and reviewed on an individual basis.

### **Legal References to Special Services**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires that local school districts locate, identify, and evaluate all private school students suspected of having a disability (for St. Martha Catholic School, the local school district is Humble ISD). This "Child Find" process must be conducted in consultation with private schools' representatives to ensure equitable access for private school students. In IDEA, these children are often referred to as "parentally placed private school children with disabilities," and the benefits available to them differ from the benefits for children with disabilities enrolled in public schools.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 educational section (frequently called "Section 504"), provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in any program receiving federal assistance. Catholic educators strive to recognize and address the needs of all those who seek a Catholic education. Within our resources, St. Martha and other Catholic schools will offer services to eligible students with special needs, when possible. However, private schools are not required to significantly alter their programs, lower or substantially modify their standards to accommodate a child with special needs. Private educational institutions are only required to make minor adjustments to accommodate eligible students.

### **Records for Special Needs Learners**

All psychological and educational evaluations/reports regarding special needs testing of students received from local public schools, persons, or agencies are forwarded to St. Martha Catholic School, upon request. These records are kept on file at the school for a period of seven (7) years after the exit of the student. These records are kept in a secure file and area accessible only to the administration, the Intervention Specialist (RTI), the Counselor, and any other appropriate staff member working with the student. Parents may view their child's record at any time. These records may not be forwarded to any other individual or agency.

### **Criteria for Acceptance of Students with Special Needs**

In making a determination regarding the admittance of a particular student, the school will review the child's ability to meet the school's academic, behavioral, and physical qualifications. Each Catholic school determines its ability to meet the need of the student applicant. Consideration will be given to the following:

- Student's demonstrated ability to meet grade level requirements
- Record of student's ability to follow school rules and regulations; and
- Student's ability to meet the physical requirements of attendance

*St. Martha Catholic School Services for Special Needs Learners*

**New Students** – When the Registrar or the administration is notified that an incoming student may have special learning needs, the administration and other appropriate school staff review current academic, social, medical, and psychological evaluations to determine if the applicant is qualified to enroll, with or without his/her disability. If the applicant is qualified for enrollment, the administration and Intervention Specialist (RTI) will then determine if reasonable adjustments can be made to the educational program which will accommodate the student's needs. If an admission is determined, the school will begin the procedures with parents to discuss a *Catholic Accommodation Plan*.

**Currently Enrolled Students** – If a teacher (or parent) is concerned about a child's academic, behavioral, or emotional progress and feels that testing may be needed, he/she will discuss concerns with the parent/family and the administration. The Intervention Specialist (RTI) will then be consulted as soon as possible. The RTI team work together to do what is best for the child and will discuss:

- The student's current educational status, including attendance records, grades, assessment data, and classroom observations;
- Previous educational efforts and strategies provided for the student and the results
- Documentation of recent vision and hearing screenings
- Updated general health history inventory
- Other information provided by the parents or teachers

Parents will be expected to disclose any pertinent information that may assist the school in educating the student. The administration and staff are responsible for recommending educational alternatives and/or referral to the local school district and/or private agency of the parent's choice for further evaluation. In some cases, the campus may not have the resources necessary to help the child be successful. The administration will then assist the family to locate an appropriate educational program for the child.

Documentation for all referrals must be kept on file. This documentation will be included in the student's records. If an evaluation determines the student requires minor accommodations, the school will begin the procedures with the parents to discuss a *Catholic Accommodation Plan*. Accommodations for a child will be noted on the report card and in the child's permanent folder.

*Student Success Expectations for Special Needs Learners*

All available school resources shall be utilized to promote students success. Lines of communications will be kept open to inform parents of student progress in all areas. Concerns about a student will be addressed initially by the classroom teacher and parent. School success can only be attained through cooperation between parents and educators. Parents are expected to disclose any pertinent information from private resources (diagnoses and recommendations) that would be of specific educational value in programming adequately for their child. If it is determined that the school's resources cannot meet the needs of a student, or the parent(s) fail to act on the school's recommendations for remediation or diagnostic evaluation, the administration may request withdrawal of the student or deny admission for the following year.

*Accommodations for Special Needs Learners*

The purpose of an accommodation of any type is to provide the appropriate instruction according to the individual student's special needs. As a result of a diagnostic evaluation, a student meets certain criteria to qualify for accommodations to his/her schoolwork. In many instances, accommodations (changes in methods of instruction) can be made in the classroom for students with special needs or for struggling students. Students who are diagnosed with a learning difference or who are diagnosed with a special need through the public school system, private doctors, or through special agencies, may be referred for special assistance with the Intervention Specialist (RTI) after the administration has verification of the student's recommended accommodations. (Curricular modifications are not provided because modifications require alterations of curricular objectives.) The number of intervention sessions per week, length of sessions, and goals will be determined by the RTI team after all available information has been reviewed.



**Standardized Assessment for Students with Special Needs**

Standardized assessments are one of several means of evaluating student performance. All students participate in the Archdiocese standardized assessment program. Students with disabilities identified through IDEA may require assessment accommodations. These accommodations should be provided on a weekly basis through the classroom teacher. These testing arrangements must be planned for in advance through a meeting with the RTI team. Any adjustments made on the standardized assessment must be requested from the Catholic Schools Office via special request on appropriate form.

**Quarterly A/B Honor Roll – Grades 3 through 8**

Students must have A's and/or B's and no less than an "S" in each subject, as well as no less than an "S" in conduct in all subjects per quarter.

**Year-End Honor Roll and Awards – Grades 3 through 8**

**More than ten (10) tardies or ten (10) absences or a combination totaling 10 or more annually, will prohibit a student from being placed on any year-end Honor Roll.**

**Golden Crusader Honor Roll:** Students must have all "A's" and "E's" in all subjects for all grading periods for the entire year. Students must also have no less than an "S" in conduct in all grading periods for the entire year.

**"A" Honor Roll:** An overall final average of an "A" or "E" in each subject, with no Report Card grade lower than a "B", and no less than an "S" conduct grade for all grading periods.

**Academic Excellence Award: (8<sup>th</sup> grade only)** The student who achieves the highest grade point average based on the final annual average for the school year will be awarded the Academic Excellence Award. The student must be enrolled at St. Martha the entire 8th grade year for eligibility.

Students meeting the criteria for both the Golden Crusader Honor Roll and the "A" Honor Roll will be recognized only for the Golden Crusader Honor Roll.

The Awards Ceremonies will occur at graduation for 8<sup>th</sup> grade and the last day of school for 3<sup>rd</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> grades.

***St. Martha Catholic School does not recognize or award perfect attendance.***

**Standardized Testing**

Standardized Testing is one of several means of assessing student performance. The nationally normed test administered throughout Catholic schools in the State of Texas each year is the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, or the IOWA. Standardized testing is administered each year during the designated Archdiocesan testing weeks. Grades 1-8 are tested annually. At St. Martha Catholic School we examine the scores of each student individually. Their scores are graphed, which helps us track their progress annually. This enables us to work on any weaknesses and help strengthen academic areas. In other words, we measure your student's individual academic growth.

- Cognitive Ability Test is given yearly to students in Grades 2, 4, and 6.
- Students in Grades 6-8 will take semester examinations at the end of each semester.

**Promotion and Retention**

A student is promoted to the next grade if, after considering the student's abilities, the student satisfactorily completes the current grade curriculum.

A student may not be retained more than twice from Grades K-8 and no more than once in the same grade.

If a student receives a final averaged grade below 70, the student fails the subject. If two core subjects are failed, the student is recommended for retention. Parents must be informed of the likelihood of **the** student's academic failure and possible retention before the end of the school year.

If all avenues have been explored and the school cannot meet the needs of the student or the parent(s) have not acted on the school's recommendations regarding diagnostic evaluation, the principal has the right to request withdrawal of the student (if currently enrolled) or refuse admittance.

### **Records**

Archdiocesan Schools do not directly receive any federal funds from the U.S. Department of Education; they are not required to follow the Family Rights and Educational Rights and Privacy Act. As advocates for justice, however, they shall respect parental and student rights to information and to confidentiality. The school shall:

- provide parents and students access to records directly related to the student (i.e., **the duplicate report card, health records, etc.**)
- obtain the written consent of parents before releasing personal information from student's records; and
- notify parents and students of these rights through a school handbook, newsletter, or other means.

Parental rights extend to either parent unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, statute, or legally binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation, or custody that specifically revokes these rights. A copy of such document must be in the school file. In case of joint custody, both parents should be equally informed of their student's progress; **any questions by SMCS of custody rights will be referred to the Archdiocesan Legal Department.**

A custody information form must be on file for all parents who are divorced or separated.

Government and law enforcement officers may have access to the student's records as required by law and/or to protect the health and safety of the student or others.

Parents requesting or wishing to view student school or clinic records must make the request in writing at least **forty-eight hours in advance.**

## **HOURS, ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

### **School and Access Hours**

The school opens daily at 7:30 a.m. and classes begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. All students are expected to be in their classrooms at 8:00 a.m. for the morning prayer and homeroom announcements. The instructional day Monday through Thursday is from 8:00 a.m. - 3:15 p.m. and 8:00 - 11:30 a.m. for students enrolled in the half-day program. On Fridays, school is dismissed at 2:15 p.m. to allow for staff development time.

The school doors will automatically unlock at 7:30 a.m. No students may arrive prior to 7:30 a.m. unless enrolled in the morning session of the Before and After School Program or another school-sanctioned activity. Parents of PreK through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students may drop off their students at the classroom door beginning at 7:30 a.m. but may not enter the classroom. Parents of 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students may walk their students into the school building but may not access the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor unless signed in at the school office for a meeting or to volunteer. Please see exceptions to arrival procedure for rainy days (page 16).

A warning bell will ring at 7:55 a.m. each morning. After the warning bell rings, parents will not be permitted to accompany students to their classrooms. The 7:55 a.m. bell is also the signal for parents to leave the school building.

The school doors will automatically lock at 8:00 a.m. *Parents attending a meeting or school presentation must go to the office to sign-in and receive a visitor pass.* All other parents or visitors must exit the building by 8:00 a.m.



Parents and visitors are not permitted to enter the school buildings after 3:30 p.m. without a scheduled appointment or approved activity.

Only students in school extra-curricular activities or the **Before and After School Program (BASP)** are permitted to be on the school grounds (buildings, pavilion, playground) after dismissal.

### **Release of Student**

The parent(s), guardian, or legal custodian (the term “legal custodian” shall mean all such persons), shall be those persons identified as such on the student’s enrollment and emergency form.

The Archdiocesan School Council Policy states: *“A student shall not be released to any person other than the legal guardian (managing conservator) except when the administrator has reasonable assurance that the release is authorized by the managing conservator.”* (ASC 210) Questioned authorization for the release of a student shall be confirmed by the principal with the legal custodian. The principal and staff may demand appropriate identification and authorization in writing from the student’s legal custodian or managing conservator. Further, the principal and staff may demand that written authorization be confirmed by telephone or in person. **Archdiocesan legal counsel may be contacted for dispute clarification.**

Archdiocesan School Council Policy is: *“Schools abide by the directives of individual court decrees and guidelines set forth by the State of Texas to settle questions concerning conservatorship; i.e., release of students, access to records, etc.”* (ASC 210)

### **Park and Walk Arrival & Dismissal**

Parents may park their cars only in campus parking lots off Woodland Hills Drive with the exclusion of any coned or other designated no parking zone. Parking is not permitted along Oak Shores Drive during arrival and dismissal times. **To ensure the safety of our school family, the manned crosswalk is the only location where crossing between buildings is permitted.**

Park and Walk dismissal will only occur at the west entrance marked “Park and Walk.” The **ONLY** location where students may be dropped off from vehicles is in the car line (see **Car Line Arrival & Dismissal** section below).

### **Car Line Arrival & Dismissal**

Students being dropped off by car will use the school parking lot drop-off point located by the main entrance of the school. Red lines and safety cones will mark the driving and parking areas for car line. No parking is permitted in the safety-coned areas from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. or from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Faculty and staff are not permitted to secure or un-latch seat belts including car seat belts. **Parents of students who cannot unbuckle or buckle their seat belts without assistance should utilize Park and Walk for arrival and dismissal.**

The use of cell phones while in the morning and afternoon car lines is prohibited. Staff will not place students in cars at dismissal while the driver is using a cell phone. Drivers who remain on a cell phone will be required to exit the parking lot and reenter the car line at the end of the line.

Please observe the 5 mph speed limit in the school parking lot for the safety of all students and staff.

### **Arrival/Dismiss from Campus Unaccompanied**

Parents must sign a permission form for students to walk or ride bikes to or from school when unaccompanied by an adult. This form will remain in effect for the school year unless a parent authorizes a change in arrival or dismissal method. Students must leave campus immediately upon dismissal. Students leaving campus without permission from a parent, staff member or activity sponsor will follow consequences for a class.

### **Changes in Dismissal Plans**

Students must know their dismissal plans when arriving to school in the morning. **Any dismissal changes must be submitted in writing or via email to the teacher and the office administrator ([teetsh@stmarthacs.org](mailto:teetsh@stmarthacs.org)) before noon.** The office will not accept any phone calls regarding changes in dismissal plans for students except in the case of an emergency.

### **Early Dismissal**

Any student leaving early must be signed out of the office by a parent or parent designee. Requests for early dismissal must be **submitted in writing or via email to the teacher and the office administrator ([teetsh@stmarthacs.org](mailto:teetsh@stmarthacs.org)) before noon**. Early dismissals must be prior to 2:50 p.m. Parents must use parking lots on the west side of campus to avoid car line dismissal.

### **Late Pickup for Students**

All students not involved in extracurricular activities or the Before and After School Program must be picked up by the parents or parent designee from the school premises by 11:30 a.m. for the Pre-Kindergarten half-day session, by 3:15 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 2:15 p.m. on Fridays. All students who have not been picked up from car line or park and walk by 3:40 p.m. on Monday through Thursday or 2:40 p.m. on Friday will be brought to the school office.

For the first two late pick-ups, students will be held in the office until 3:50 p.m. before automatically being sent to the Before and After School Program.

With the third late student pick up, the student(s) will be taken to the Before and After School Program room. Parents will be invoiced for a one-time registration fee of \$20 per student and the drop-in rate of \$15 per student for each day in attendance.

Students in the half-day program who are not picked up by 11:30 a.m. will be brought to the school office, and a \$20 fee will be assessed beginning with the third late pickup.

### **Rainy Day Arrival and Dismissal**

In the event of rain, park and walk arrival and dismissal will still occur at the west entrance of the building marked "Park and Walk." Car line arrival & dismissal will still use the entrance along Oak Shores and follow the flow of traffic. Students will be dropped off at arrival and picked up at dismissal under the building canopy at the south exit. If the parking lot is not accessible, students will be dropped off at arrival and dismissed at dismissal along Oak Shores Drive between the safety cones.

For safety reasons, on rainy day arrivals, the crosswalk may not be used by parents or students utilizing park and walk. Kindergarten to second grade students and parents must use the doors to the main building and proceed up and over to the K-2 classrooms. Once the warning bell rings at 7:55 a.m., parents may not accompany students to their classrooms with the exception of the PreK students.

### **Impairment of Parent at Release**

A student will not be released to a parent or parent designee if the school personnel believes the person to be impaired (such as inebriated) thus compromising the student's safety. Another person from the student's emergency contact list will be called.

## **PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS**

### **Visitors to Campus**

The school has controlled access during the school day. Therefore, visitors to St. Martha Catholic School must enter through the main building entrance. The school utilizes Raptor, a visitor management software, to instantly screen for criminals and sex offenders. First time visitors to the school must present a valid state issued driver's license to be entered into the Raptor system and to receive a visitor pass. On all subsequent visits, visitors must check in at the school office to receive their visitor pass. Visitors must wear their visitor pass at all times while on campus, or they may be asked to leave. The school administration reserves the right to refuse admittance of visitors to the school as deemed necessary. If visitors will be interacting with students while on campus, they must be in compliance with Virtus requirements (please see page 40). Please refer to the **Lunch Program** section on page 36 for rules regarding visitors during lunch periods.

### **Classroom Visits**

No class or teacher may be interrupted during school hours without permission received from the principal. **Visiting classes is not recommended as it disrupts the class routines and requires VIRTUS compliances. If a visit is necessary, the principal will make arrangements. Regular teacher conferences may be scheduled with teachers during their conference times.**

### **Conferences**

Communication between students, parents, and teachers is essential for a strong educational program. Two formal Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences are scheduled for the school year (one per semester). Additional conferences may be arranged by contacting the student's teacher. The two formal conferences are considered student school days; therefore, students must attend the conference with the parent or they will be counted as absent for the day.

### **Parental Communication of Concerns**

In keeping with the Church's principle of subsidiarity, problems should be solved at the lowest level whenever possible. Persons having a problem with another individual should go directly to that person before going to that person's superior. **If parents have a concern with a teacher, they must discuss the difficulty first with the teacher.** If the parent feels the concern is not resolved, the parent may make an appointment with the assistant principal.

Appointments with the assistant principal or with teachers need to be requested in writing or by calling the school office to make an appointment. A teacher will return phone calls within 48 hours.

### **Parent/Student Complaint Process**

The purpose of this process is to provide students and parents of students enrolled in any parish or regional school within the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston with an orderly procedure for the equitable and prompt resolution of complaints. This process is intended to resolve disputes at the lowest possible level in a cooperative, conciliatory Christian atmosphere.

No person shall be discriminated against because of filing or participating in this complaint process, and no reprisals of any kind shall be taken against any person because of participation in this complaint process.

The process is not intended to be adversarial in nature and legal counsel shall represent neither party to the complaint during any phase of the process. This process replaces all previous processes and statements regarding the institution and processing of complaints at both the local and archdiocesan level.

It is the intent of this policy to resolve student/parent complaints at the lowest possible administrative level and in a cooperative Christian atmosphere. Prior to using the steps set forth in this process, a student or his/her parent shall meet with the person with whom he/she is having a dispute. If the matter is not then settled to the complainant's satisfaction, the complainant shall present the complaint in accordance to the procedures within this process. Any parent who wants to embark upon this process will contact the principal regarding the student/parent complaint process procedures and forms.

### **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

No person shall be discriminated against, and no reprisals of any kind shall be taken against any person solely because of participation in the conflict resolution process.

### **School Parties, Events and Food Policies**

Classroom parties are held for Christmas (Grades PreK-8) and Valentine's Day (Grades PreK-5). All parent volunteers attending classroom parties must be VIRTUS trained. Only two room parent coordinators per classroom are allowed to enter the classroom for set-up at the designated time. Additional VIRTUS-trained parents may sign-in at the school office to attend at the time the parties begin. **Non-VIRTUS trained siblings are not allowed into the classroom due to safety considerations.**

All foods to be served to students at any school event must be from the school approved food list developed by the administration and the school nurses. A Food Notification form must be submitted to the homeroom teacher five days in advance of the date the food will be served. For student birthdays, foods will be limited to a treat from the school approved food list. If the homeroom teacher was not aware in advance of the food, and it arrives at school without prior approval, the treats will not be served that day. Treats are only distributed at lunch, recess or snack time (teacher will designate). No balloons are allowed in the classroom.

If invitations to personal parties are to be distributed at school, all classmates should be invited. If all the students are not invited, it is the responsibility of the parent to mail out the invitations individually.

If a student has any diagnosed food allergies, parents should contact the nurse or homeroom teacher to make alternative arrangements for food at the time of a party.

### **Student Use of School Telephone**

Permission for students to use the school telephone must be approved by the school administration or office administrator and may be restricted to emergencies. Parents are asked not to call the school for the delivery of messages to students except in case of emergencies.

### **Forgotten Items**

Items forgotten at home, i.e. lunches, homework, books, etc., are to be placed on the table located across from the school office. It is the student's responsibility to check the table as classes will not be interrupted to deliver forgotten items. Items left on the table must be labeled with the student's name.

### **Deliveries**

Deliveries of non-school related items to students will not be sent to the classroom. Any delivery to a student will be held in the office until dismissal.

### **Lost and Found**

All items are kept in the box marked Lost and Found located outside the main office. All uniforms and school supplies must be labeled with the student's name in order to claim. Articles unclaimed for an extended time will be donated to the recycled uniform sale or St. Vincent de Paul Society. The box will be emptied at the end of every quarter.

### **Lockers**

Lockers are the property of St. Martha Catholic School and may be inspected at any time. Locker use is a privilege extended to the students; a privilege that may be revoked at any time. Students will abide by the school's rules regarding property usage and care. Students are advised that lockers and all contents can be searched for just cause and without prior notice.

Lockers should be kept neat and clean at all times. No one may put stickers or inappropriate items in or on the lockers or write on them or in them. **Decorations can be distracting and must be pre-approved by the principal through the middle school grade level team leader. Decorations are limited to shelves, wallpaper and magnetic mirrors and other magnets. No battery operated items or coverings on the bottom of the locker or on the outside of the locker door are allowed.** Students are assigned lockers by the middle school teachers and may only use the units assigned to them.

Combination locks are provided by the school at the beginning of the year. If a student loses his/her lock, he/she **must** purchase another from the school office for \$10. There are many community groups using the school facility and it is best to keep school materials locked after school hours. If a locker is damaged, students and parents will be assessed a fee.

### **Backpacks**

***Middle school students will keep backpacks in lockers.*** They must be small enough to fit in a locker. **Due to safety concerns, rolling backpacks are not allowed by students in any grade level.**

### **Reading Material**

Reading material brought from home other than St. Martha library books or novels must be approved by the school librarian, the principal and or assistant principal. If a book is deemed inappropriate for the school, the student may pick it up in the school office at the end of the school day.

The use of any personal electronic reading device at school is not permitted unless listed in a student accommodation plan.

### **Change of Clothes**

Pre Kindergarten – Kindergarten students are required to have a complete change of clothes available in their classroom for use if necessary.

## **UNIFORMS/DRESS CODE**

St. Martha Catholic School students wear uniforms provided by the Parker Uniform Company. This dress code reinforces the belief that students are important not because of what they wear or possess, but because of who they are. St. Martha Catholic School is a learning environment and distractions should be avoided. Students are expected to be neatly and cleanly dressed in appropriate uniforms each school day unless otherwise instructed by the administration. Any variation of the dress code per the handbook is unacceptable and subject to the following consequences:

- In Grades Pre-K through 5, a dress code violation will be issued when a student is not in compliance with the dress code policy. A discipline offense will be issued on the third dress code violation.
- Middle school students will receive a responsibility infraction when not in compliance with the dress code policy. Please refer to grade level discipline policies for more information.
- Students in violation of the dress code must come into compliance in agreement with the school administration or may be subject to suspension.

### **Dress Code Policies**

- All students are expected to be in the full regulation uniform on all school days. Full regulation uniform includes formal dress uniforms on all Mass days and daily uniform options on all other school days per this handbook.
- Students in Grades 6-8 must wear the regulation P.E. uniform during all Physical Education classes. St. Martha Catholic School sweatshirts with the school logo may be worn for P.E. in cold weather.
- Long sleeve shirts may not be worn under any short sleeve SMCS shirt. The only long sleeve shirt that is permissible is the Parker Uniform long sleeve polo shirt.
- *Skirts and jumpers must not be shorter than the top of the students' knee. Shorts must not be shorter than two inches above the knee.*
- *All uniforms must be purchased at Parker Uniform Company, except spirit shirts, middle school hoodies, P.E. uniforms and black athletic shorts worn under the jumper or skirt.*
- Parents are asked to label all uniform items with their last name in indelible laundry ink.
- Parents are expected to replace faded, torn and outgrown uniforms as needed during the school year.
- It is necessary for the students in Grades K – 8 to be in *formal dress uniform* when they attend School Mass.
- Makeup is not allowed.
- Nail polish and nail tips are not allowed.
- Girls with pierced ears may wear stud or small ball earrings in the ear lobe. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings. Multiple earrings in any ear are not acceptable. Piercings other than ear lobes are not allowed.
- Markings upon the skin, permanent or temporary, are not permitted without a valid documented medical reason.
- If a necklace is worn, it **must** have a religious symbol attached and needs to be worn inside the collar and remain unseen. Bracelets and rings are not permitted. Watches are permitted in Grades 2 through 8 as long as the watch does not cause a disturbance in the classroom **or have Wi-fi capability – this also applies to Fitbits, iPhone watches and any other devices that have Wi-fi capability.**

- Hairstyles for boys and girls should meet the standards of good taste for the classroom and be of one's own natural haircolor. Haircuts, coloring, extensions, styles and accessories that are disruptive to the learning environment (as determined by the school administration) or bring added attention to an individual are not allowed. Shaved hair styles, messages/designs carved into hair, and mohawks are not allowed for both boys and girls at St. Martha Catholic School. Boys' hair length should be above the shirt collar and ears. Both boys and girls may not have hair styles that hang over or in the eyes to impede vision. The principal and/or assistant principal will contact parents regarding hairstyles that are not appropriate for the school environment.
- Shirt tails and blouses must be tucked in at all times. Middle school girls' tailored white three-quarter sleeves Parker blouse may be left un-tucked. Shirtsleeves must be rolled down. All buttons except the collar button must be buttoned.

### **Uniforms (Formal and Daily)**

#### **GIRLS AND BOYS 3K AND 4K**

##### **Formal Dress Uniform:**

There is no formal dress uniform for Grades 3K and 4K.

##### **Daily Uniform Options:**

Khaki shorts

Khaki long pants

Long or short sleeve burgundy polo knit shirt with SMCS logo

Burgundy cardigan

Parker black fleece jacket

Khaki culottes or skort (girls)

Sweatshirt with SMCS logo from Parker Uniforms

Hair accessories for girls **must** be black, white or burgundy or a combination of the three. The size of hair accessories should not distract or impede the sight of any other student.

Solid white or black socks above the ankle

Tights (solid white or black – no designs, no leggings)

Shoes within dress code guidelines

Please note that no jumpers are allowed for Pre-Kindergarteners.

#### **GIRLS GRADES K-8**

##### **Formal Dress Uniform:**

###### **Grades K-5:**

Solid white or black socks above ankle or tights (solid white or black – no designs, no leggings)

Burgundy cardigan or Parker black fleece jacket (optional)

Plaid jumper (girls must wear black athletic shorts under the jumper - no longer than the jumper)

Tulane blouse

Girl's plaid tie

Shoes within dress code guidelines

###### **Grades 6-8:**

Plaid skirt

Three-quarter sleeve white Parker blouse

Girl's burgundy tie

Dress shoes in black or brown

Black cardigan or Parker black fleece jacket (optional)

**Daily Uniform Options:**

**Grades K-8:**

Plaid walking shorts  
Khaki slacks  
Parker sweatshirt with SMCS logo  
Parker black fleece jacket  
Solid white or black socks above ankle – no designs  
Tights (solid white or black – no designs, no leggings)  
Hair accessories (**must** be black, white or burgundy)  
Shoes within dress code guidelines

**Grades K-5**

Long or short sleeve white Tulane blouse  
Long or short sleeve burgundy polo knit shirt with SMCS logo  
Plaid jumper (girls must wear black athletic shorts under the jumper - no longer than the jumper)  
Khaki culottes or skort  
Girl's plaid tie  
Burgundy Cardigan or Vest with emblem

**Grades 6-8:**

Three quarter sleeve white Parker blouse  
Long or short sleeve black polo knit shirt with SMCS logo  
Plaid skirt (girls must wear black athletic shorts under the skirt, no longer than the skirt)  
Girl's solid burgundy tie  
Black cardigan or vest with emblem  
SMCS hoodie sweatshirt purchased through SMCS athletic department

**BOYS GRADES K-8**

**Formal Dress Uniform:**

**Grades K-5:**

Solid white or black socks above ankle  
Black or brown belt (required with all slacks with belt loops)  
Burgundy cardigan or Parker black fleece jacket (optional)  
Khaki slacks  
Long or short sleeve white Oxford shirt  
Boy's plaid tie  
Shoes within dress code guidelines

**Grades 6-8:**

Khaki slacks  
Long or short sleeve burgundy striped Oxford shirt  
Boy's burgundy tie  
Dress shoes in black or brown  
Black cardigan or Parker black fleece jacket (optional)

**Daily Uniform Options:**

**Grades K-8:**

Khaki slacks  
Khaki walking shorts

Black or brown belt (required with all slacks and shorts with belt loops)  
Parker Sweatshirt with SMCS logo  
Parker black fleece jacket  
Solid white or black socks above ankle  
Shoes within dress code guidelines

**Grades K-5:**

Long or short sleeve white Oxford shirt  
Boy's plaid tie  
Long or short sleeve burgundy polo knit shirt with SMCS logo  
Burgundy cardigan or vest with emblem

**Grades 6-8:**

Long or short sleeve burgundy striped Oxford shirt  
Boy's burgundy tie  
Long or short sleeve black polo knit shirt with SMCS logo  
Black cardigan or vest with emblem  
SMCS hoodie sweatshirt purchased through SMCS athletic department

**Shoes for PreK - Grade 8**

Students' shoes must always be properly secured (tied, buckled or fastened). Students may not wear flip-flops, sandals, boots, barefoot sports shoes (toe shoes), platforms, or shoes with heels in excess of one inch to school. **Shoes may not have lights or wheels and must have a back (no slip-ons). Shoes (athletic and non-athletic) and shoe laces should be solid white, black, brown, or gray and may have accent colors that are only white, black, brown, or gray, including the trim and soles (no patterns, prints, designs, sparkles, glitter or charms are acceptable). Required dress shoes for Mass days must be black or brown for Grades 6-8.**

*If your student's shoes have any other color than white, black, brown, or gray, they are considered "out of dress code."*

**Outerwear Options**

On formal dress uniform days, only a Parker cardigan, vest or black fleece jacket may be worn to Mass. Sweatshirts are not permitted at Mass. Sweaters or sweatshirts are not to be tied around the waist or draped over the shoulders. Coats or jackets worn to school may not be worn during the school day in the school building. In colder weather and in order to avoid illnesses, 100 percent of the class must have proper outer wear to go outside for recess.

Students should not keep umbrellas at school. Parents may walk with their student to the building with umbrellas, but they should not be left at school with the student for the safety of all students.

**Liturgical Celebrations**

Students in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade participate in an all-school Mass weekly, normally on Wednesdays. Formal dress uniform must be worn for Mass. **Sweatshirts are not permitted at Mass.** The 4K classes attend Mass beginning in October, and 3K classes begin attending Mass in January.

Students may also participate in special religious feast day celebrations which may include Mass.

**Spirit Day**

The first Thursday of the month is "SPIRIT DAY" unless otherwise noted on the school calendar or "e-blast." Students may wear the following as an option to the school uniform: the current year's spirit t-shirt (sold through the school) with long blue jeans (with no stains, tears or markings) or school uniform pants, shorts, or skirts.

**Free Dress Day**

Free Dress Day is a privilege offered by the administration as an incentive for various activities during the school year. Any student with Free Dress Day privilege may wear a school-appropriate long- or short-sleeve shirt with



long pants or jeans (no tears, stains or markings). No leggings, jeggings or excessively tight jeans (at the discretion of the administration) are allowed. Any girls with the privilege also may wear school-appropriate skirts or dresses (no shorter than one inch above the knee) with shorts underneath. No costumes of any type are allowed for Free Dress Day. Shoes or boots must be safe – no slippers, flip-flops, high heels, backless sandals or backless shoes are allowed.

### **T-Shirt Tuesday**

Students of families who purchase T-shirt Tuesday privileges for the fall and/or spring semester may wear *the current year's spirit shirt* with long blue jeans (with no stains, tears or markings) or school uniform pants, shorts or skirts on designated Tuesdays during the semester for which the privilege is purchased.

### **P.E. Uniforms**

Students in Grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> will be required to change from their school uniforms into P.E. uniforms for the P.E. period only. Each middle school student is required to purchase and wear his/her own P.E. uniform. These uniforms will be sold by the school and order forms will be sent home with the students in August. **The middle school P.E. teacher provides P.E. uniform guidelines on the P.E. website.**

## **CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE**

Discipline at St. Martha Catholic School is based on ***The Right Choice Program***. This program is designed to give attention to the well-behaved student and to focus attention on developing social skills. It strives to assist the student to become confident and well informed enough to accept the responsibility for his/her conduct. The aim is to help students understand the concept of choices and consequences.

Teachers will work with the assistant principal to implement mini-lessons throughout the year on concepts of discipline.

Discipline routines and procedures will be discussed with students for understanding of expectations. Teachers will develop class rules and the concept of “choices” will be taught. Consequences will be serious, realistic, and consistent since consequences play a key role in maintaining discipline.

Parents will receive a copy of the grade level classroom rules and consequences in order to be better informed of discipline procedures that will occur in the classroom learning environment. These grade level discipline policies are required to be signed and returned to the classroom teacher in August.

## **STANDARD OF CONDUCT**

At St. Martha Catholic School, we believe it is important to treat each other with dignity and respect, exemplifying Christian behavior. The goal of discipline is to enable students to move from externally imposed discipline to self-discipline. While recognizing that students first learn appropriate behavior at home, it is the belief at St. Martha Catholic School that parents, teachers, and students are all responsible for creating and maintaining an environment that encourages growth and learning.

Teachers, parents, and students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner befitting the reputation of a Catholic School, both on campus and at school sponsored activities. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action being taken.

Unacceptable behavior subverts the mission of Catholic Education and threatens the educational experience and the well-being of all affected persons. Whether occurring within or outside the school, when behavior jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, or is contrary to Gospel values, the student, volunteer or parent can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences, including expulsion, termination, revocation of the volunteer's services, or being asked to withdraw their student from the school.

St. Martha Catholic School has high expectations of students and students are expected to:

1. Be respectful
2. Be responsible
3. Be trustworthy
4. Follow directions
5. Stop, look and listen

St. Martha Catholic School students are expected to:

- a) be on time and prepared for class with books, pens, and completed assignments, in compliance with the teachers' requests
- b) be quiet in the inside halls
- c) use inside voices in the Family Life Center
- d) be reverent in Church
- e) be in uniform
- f) observe all safety rules
- g) refrain from chewing gum
- h) use proper manners
- i) be respectful in words and actions
- j) do his/her own work

Should a student fail to maintain the expected "standard of conduct," the school will make every attempt to ensure that the break from the standard is temporary. Should a student require disciplinary action, this action will be administered with the consequences following the defined Discipline Code of St. Martha Catholic School.

#### **School-Wide Code of Conduct**

**A. Students are not permitted to carry or keep in their locker or backpacks cell phones, pagers, cameras, or other electronic devices while in school. All lockers and their contents are subject to search per school policy (see p. 18). If a student requires a cell phone for use after school hours, the cell phone must be turned into the office when the student arrives at school and may be checked out after school is dismissed. The first time a student checks his/her cell phone at the office, a cell phone form will be completed in order to keep the phone at school. Cell phones may not be used while attending BASP. The school is not responsible for any loss or damage to cell phones or devices brought to the school.**

A student who is found with a cell phone or other devices as stated above in his/her possession, backpack or locker while in school is subject to the following consequences:

1. Photos, call history, text messages, etc., may be reviewed by the principal or assistant principal
2. In addition, on the first incident the student is required to meet with a member of the school administration at the end of the day to retrieve the cell phone/device.
3. The second incident requires that a parent comes to school to retrieve the cell phone/device from a member of the school administration.
4. Additional incidents of cell phone/device policy violations will result in a conference with the student, a parent and the school principal or assistant principal. At the discretion of the administration, the student may lose the privilege of having a cell phone/device in the school for a probation period of 30 school days. If during that probationary period or any subsequent time the student is found to have a cell phone/device in his/her possession, backpack or locker, the cell phone/device will be confiscated by the school administration and will be returned to the parent only at the end of the school year.

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices are subject to suspension and/or expulsion.

**B. Each student is expected to live the gospel values.**

1. Students are expected to be kind, considerate, and courteous to everyone. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."
2. Students are expected to be respond respectfully to all adults and fellow students at all times. Students will not show disrespect, defiance, or inattention in tone, attitude, or action (verbal, non-verbal, or gesture).

- C. Each student is expected to respect the rights and possessions of others.
1. Students will not use violence with respect to physical, verbal, and written actions.
  2. Students will not use physical or verbal abuse toward another individual.
  3. Students will not use foul language (written, spoken, or gestured) nor be in the possession of obscene books, magazines, pictures, or objects.
  4. Students will not touch another's belongings, contents of locker, or desk without the schoolmate's consent.
  5. Students will not engage in any inappropriate public display of affection.
  6. Students will not use disruptive voice levels in classrooms, halls, or restrooms.
  7. Students will walk in the school building.
  8. Students will not bring electronic devices or toys, including fitbits, iPhone watches and any other devices that have Wi-fi capability.
  9. Students will not play unsupervised games involving physical contact, including "play-fighting."
  10. Students will not arrive tardy to school or to class.
  11. Students will not sell any personal item on school property.
  12. Students will not wear make-up or nail polish to school.
- D. Each student is expected to respect school property.
1. Students will not deface, destroy, or steal school property, equipment, materials, or another's personal property.
  2. Students will keep textbooks clean and covered.
  3. Students will put all trash in proper trash containers.
  4. Students will not eat food on the playground during the school day without authorization from school personnel.
  5. Students will not have or chew gum in school, on school property, or during school-sponsored events.
  6. Students will not enter or remain on the school grounds at unauthorized times without proper permission or proper adult supervision.
  7. When deemed appropriate by the school, students' parents must pay for damages to school property involving the students.
- E. Each student is expected to have respect for himself or herself.
1. Students are forbidden to use, possess, or distribute narcotics or drugs, including alcohol or tobacco.
  2. Students are forbidden the possession of any object that might be considered a weapon.
  3. Students will not absent themselves nor leave the school building or grounds without authorization.
  4. Students will not engage in dangerous play or disruptive behavior in the school building or on the school grounds.
  5. Students will be responsible for their own work and for turning it in on time. Students are expected to complete their work and tests with integrity. No unauthorized aids should be given, received or used.
  6. Students will adhere to the uniform policy including personal neatness and proper grooming.
  7. Students will adhere to the Code of Conduct at all school-sponsored events, all excursions, field trips, etc.
  8. Students will adhere to established classroom rules.

Harassment is considered a severe infraction. The consequence of such behavior is the student being sent to the principal immediately. Therefore, consequences up to and including expulsion, shall be taken against any person who engages in any type of harassment including electronic harassment (cyber-bullying). Harassment includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

- Unwelcome and persistent behavior that makes a person feel threatened, humiliated, uncomfortable, or unsafe.
- Verbal conduct such as racial slurs, the use of vulgar or obscene language, derogatory jokes or comments, social ostracization, and/or personally damaging statements made about others.
- Behavior that is sexual or lewd in nature including sexual advances, physical contact, and other verbal, physical, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.
- Behavior that is intimidating, including but not limited to threatening gestures, assault, unwanted or inappropriate touching, and blocking of normal movement that interferes with another student's work, study, or play.
- Retaliation or intimidation for having reported or threatened to report harassment.

**Cyber-bullying** is defined as use of the internet, cell phone or other electronic device to send or post text messages or visual images intended to hurt or embarrass another person.

Cyber-bullying includes, but is not necessarily limited to the following:

- Cruel instant computer messaging or threatening e-mails.
- Mean, repeated cell phone text messages.
- Creating a website for the purpose of mocking certain students or school personnel.
  
- Posting humiliating “photo shopped” or digitally modified images of certain students or school personnel.
- Forwarding “private” photos or videos to other students.
- Pretending to be someone else by using someone else’s online screen.

Students are encouraged to report any incident of harassment to the teacher or principal. The principal has the responsibility to investigate harassment or bullying complaints in an expeditious manner.

In the discipline management policy, offenses will be categorized as Class A, B, C, or D.

“Class A” offenses consist of:

- violence (any physical, verbal, written, or action that is violent in nature)
- vandalism
- assault
- possession of drugs and/or alcohol
- being on campus under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- possession of a weapon on campus
- arson
- participating in disruptive activities by a group
- using any tobacco product on school property or at a school-related activity
- threats of bodily injury or harm to a student/school personnel
- possession of a electronic device or any other type of communication system disruptive to instruction
- interfering with security or fire alarms (If a student willingly sets off the security system and causes the police to make a visit to the school, that student’s family will be responsible for paying the fee charged by the police for making a security call. Further, willful interference with a security system will be seen as vandalism, and those consequences will apply.)

The consequences for Class A offenses are the notification of proper authorities, pastor, and Superintendent’s Office, an assistant principal/parent/student conference and an out-of-school suspension. The severity of the offense may call for an expulsion of the student and family from the school.

“Class B” offenses consist of:

- theft
- fighting
- alteration of records
- insubordination
- disrespect of teachers and/or staff members
- engaging in chronic or repeated behavior which disrupts the learning environment
- using an ethnic epithet

The consequences for Class B offenses are an assistant principal/parent/student conference and an in-school or out-of-school suspension. The severity of the offense may call for an expulsion from the school.

“Class C” offenses consist of:

- display of inappropriate affection
- verbal abuse
- profanity/inappropriate language
- forgery
- cheating
- classroom disruption

- disrespect of the rights and property of others

The consequences for Class C offenses are a student/teacher conference, a phone call to the parent, and a scheduled school detention or in-school suspension. The severity of the offense may call for an administrative conference with parent.

“Class D” offenses consist of:

- noncompliance with uniform standards, including PE
- noncompliance with individual classroom teacher’s “in-house” rules
- chewing gum on school premises

The consequences for these offenses progress according to the grade level consequences and discipline policy.

The principal and faculty reserve the right to address any additional inappropriate behavior.

### **Parent Conduct**

Parents are expected to adhere to behaviors that are consistent with good moral and ethical principles and do not interfere with the operation of, or reflect adversely on, the school. Disruptive, threatening, or illegal behavior of a parent, whether on the school campus or at any St. Martha Catholic School sanctioned event, may result in expulsion of the student.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Students of St. Martha Catholic School are expected to adhere to the highest standards of behavior with regard to academic honesty. The following policies apply to the school day, BASP, and any school-sanctioned activity. Failure to comply with these standards will result in disciplinary action.

### **Cheating**

Cheating is a form of dishonesty where a student attempts to give the appearance of a level of knowledge or skill that the student has not obtained. Examples include:

- Copying from another person’s work during an examination or while completing an assignment
- Allowing someone to copy from a student during an examination or while completing an assignment
- Using unauthorized materials during an examination or while completing an assignment
- Collaborating on an examination or assignment without authorization
- Taking an examination or completing an assignment for another, or permitting another to take an examination or to complete an assignment for you
- Communicating with another student by any means, electronic, verbal, or written, regarding the contents of a quiz or test before all students have taken the test or all grades have been posted
- Cheating on an assignment or test (this will result in a zero being recorded for that assignment or test)

Cheating is considered a “Class C” offense and is subject to additional disciplinary measures as discussed in the Student Code of Conduct. Cheating also includes plagiarism which means students cannot reproduce other people’s work.

### **Fabrication or Falsification**

Fabrication or falsification is a form of dishonesty in which a student invents or distorts the origin or content of information used as an authority. Examples include:

- Citing sources that do not exist
- Attributing to a source, ideas or information that are not included in the source
- Citing a source for a proposition that it does not support
- Citing a source in a bibliography when the source was neither consulted nor cited in the body of the paper
- Intentionally distorting the meaning or applicability of data
- Inventing data or statistical results to support conclusions

### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism of any kind is an unacceptable practice in Archdiocesan schools where students are expected to acknowledge the original intellectual work of others. Many instances involve violations of copyright law in regards to materials posted on the internet. Plagiarism involves the act of copying another person's work and submitting it as one's own individual works, thoughts or ideas without proper acknowledgement.

**Intentional plagiarism:** Intentional plagiarism is the deliberate act of representing the words, ideas, or data of another as your own without providing recognition of the sources from where the information originated or was copied. Providing recognition of the source is known as "citing the source," which involves including quotation marks around the copied work and providing a reference or footnote about the source.

Intentional plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft that violates widely recognized principles of academic integrity as well as ethics. Intentional plagiarism warrants disciplinary action following our Right Choice Program.

**Inadvertent plagiarism:** Inadvertent plagiarism involves the inappropriate, but unintentional, use of another's words, ideas, or data without proper acknowledgement. Inadvertent plagiarism usually results from a failure to follow guidelines for documenting sources or from rushing through research and writing without properly citing the author's work. Students who are in doubt as to whether they are providing proper recognition of sources have the responsibility to consult with their teacher to obtain guidance. Students failing to pay close attention to these details may receive less than full credit on assignments and possible disciplinary action following our Right Choice program.

### **Discipline Code**

Our ultimate goal in discipline is to help our students become self-disciplined. Students are expected to show courtesy and respect to themselves, to each other, to adults, and to property. At no time will defiance, violence, or insubordination be tolerated.

St. Martha Catholic School shall maintain a community environment free from all forms of harassment and shall insist that all persons be treated with dignity and respect.

Harassment is unacceptable conduct that is severe, perverse, and deliberate. This school will treat allegations of harassment seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential, and thorough manner.

The school also has expectations of parents. Discipline begins at home. Parents are the primary educators of their students. Both the school and the parents should reinforce and support good conduct as that becoming of a Christian student.

Students who misbehave and/or infringe on the academic process will be disciplined. Parents will be notified whenever a student has seriously misbehaved within the classroom or during extracurricular activities. Prior to a telephone call or written notification, parents can be assured that the student has been spoken to regarding the misconduct and subsequent consequences. The phone call or written communication serves to alert you of the situation and request your assistance in managing your student.

Specific breaches of discipline in the classroom are under the authority of the supervising teacher. However, all teachers have jurisdiction over all students, regardless of age or grade level.

The principal reserves the right to: put the student on probation, on home study, suspend, or expel as deemed appropriate given the circumstances. The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary matters and can waive any disciplinary action for just cause.

### **Disciplinary Probation**

A student's continuous misbehavior may result in the student being placed on disciplinary probation by the principal and/or the assistant principal. The assistant principal will determine the length of time of the probation and will conference with student and parents regarding the reasons for the probation. During the probation and at the end

of probation, the parents will be informed of the student's progress. After consultation with the student's teachers, the assistant principal will determine if sufficient improvement has occurred. If insufficient progress is noted, the assistant principal may consider other disciplinary actions.

If a student's behavior continues to be in serious violation of the Discipline Code, parents will be informed that the next violation of the Discipline Code may result in a suspension. If a student poses a continuing threat of disrupting the educational process, the student will be removed from class, and parents will be notified.

### **Suspension**

Suspension is a serious punishment, which shall be used when a student is in serious violation of the Discipline Code or commits a major offense. Should it be necessary to invoke suspension, both oral and written notice will be given to the student and parents. The suspension may be either "in-school" or "out-of-school" suspension. This is at the discretion of the principal and/or assistant principal.

*In-school suspension* means that the student will not be allowed to attend classes with fellow students, but is required to complete all regular class work in another setting. An in-school suspension may last up to five days. The student may also be scheduled to work with the school counselor during this time period.

*Out-of-school suspension* requires that the student remain away from school under the parents' supervision. School work will be assigned and completion required. All assigned work is due on the date of return. Incomplete work will result in a grade of zero.

### **Major Offenses**

1. Violent actions (verbal, written or physical)
2. Destruction of property or vandalism of any kind
3. Smoking or use of tobacco, alcohol, or other harmful substances
4. Use of a controlled substance (See Archdiocesan Policy below)
5. Theft/cheating
6. Fighting
7. Harassment (including sexual harassment and cyber bullying)
8. Intimidation
9. Leaving school grounds without authorization
10. Repeated acts of incorrigible and/or disrespectful behavior
11. Possession of weapons and/or other potentially dangerous items
12. Repeated misbehavior which disrupts the learning environment
13. Other acts of behavior unbecoming a St. Martha Catholic School student

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter and generally every other possible solution will have been explored with the student and his/her parents prior to taking this action.

A student's continued enrollment at the school would be subject to his or her meeting the scholastic and behavioral standards set by the principal. If any student fails to meet these standards, and if the principal believes that continued enrollment of the student is not in the best interest of the student or the school, the principal shall so advise the pastor.

If the pastor and the principal decide that the student should be expelled, the principal shall arrange a conference with the parents of the student, and explain to them the reasons for the expulsion. A written notification of the expulsion, stating the circumstances and dates of the matter shall be sent to the Archdiocesan Superintendent of Schools. Immediate expulsion can take place when a student:

- possesses, uses, sells, or distributes narcotics, dangerous drugs, or alcohol.
- smokes or uses any tobacco product.
- possesses, uses, or conceals a weapon on his/her person or in his/her possession.
- engages in assault that results in serious physical injury to a student or any school personnel.

- threatens bodily injury or harm to a student/school personnel member.
- vandalizes school property or the property of others.
- participates in disruptive activities by a group such as gangs.
- commits persistent acts of incorrigible behavior which disrupts the learning environment.

***The disruptive, threatening, or illegal behavior of a parent may result in the expulsion of a student.***

#### **Archdiocesan Policy – Use of Controlled Substance**

The use of illicit drugs and the unlawful possession and use of alcohol is wrong and harmful. The principal has the right to search the school grounds for suspected substances in cases of students.

A student is subject to removal from class, which may result in suspension, expulsion, or referral for prosecution, if while on school property or while attending a school sponsored activity off school property, there is question of one of the following:

1. Chemical substance use, possession for consumption, sale or dispensing of illegal drugs and narcotics (hard or soft drugs, alcohol, inhalants, marijuana or controlled substance)
2. Acting under the influence of an illegal drug – alcohol, narcotic, marijuana or a controlled substance
3. Medication misuse or overdose

Upon discovery of a drug related situation stated above, the principal will:

- a. Report the incident to the pastor, and superintendent
- b. Notify the student's parent immediately and request a conference.

After a conference with the parent and student, the student is subject to removal from class, suspension, expulsion or referral for prosecution. A recommendation to the parent is made for evaluation and possible treatment for the student.

#### **Guns and Weapons**

Guns and other weapons are not permitted on campus.

#### **Sexual Harrassment**

It is the policy of the Archdiocese that all students should attend school in an environment free of gender discrimination, which encompasses freedom from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is immoral and reprehensible and will not be tolerated in the Catholic school. In both obvious and subtle ways, the very possibility of sexual harassment is destructive to individuals and to the church/school community as a whole.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

- unwelcome sexual advances
- physical contact such as attempted or actual sexual assault, unwanted touching
- displaying pictures which are sexual in nature verbal conduct such as:
- sexually-oriented kidding, teasing, joking, or flirting,
- verbal abuse of a sexual nature
- leering, whistling, sexually aggressive gestures or sounds

In addition, retaliation against students who report sexual harassment or who assist the Archdiocese in investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is strictly prohibited. Acts of retaliation will result in disciplinary action. The Archdiocese encourages parental and student support in its efforts to address sexual misconduct through the prompt reporting of any suspected sexual harassment or abuse of students in its schools.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

#### **Clinic Policies**

At St. Martha Catholic School, we strive to maintain a high level of wellness in our student population. It is the parents' responsibility to monitor the health of their children and keep them at home if they are ill. **Students**



**should be free of fever (less than 100 degrees) for twenty-four hours before returning to school after an illness. If a student vomits or has diarrhea, he/she must also be free of symptoms for twenty-four hours.**

Parents should check with a doctor regarding sore throats before sending their students to school. Rashes, red draining eyes, and skin lesions need to have a written release from a physician prior to returning to school. Students who are ill must be picked up within 45 minutes of receiving the initial call from the school staff. If we are unable to reach the parent, the emergency contact(s) will be notified.

If your student has any **physician diagnosed health problems** such as diabetes, asthma, epilepsy, severe allergies, heart conditions, serious health conditions, or is taking any medication, you must inform the school nurse. A health care plan will be put into place to properly care for your student while in school or at school events. ***The health care plan will follow a doctor's written diagnosis.***

Food allergies are a concern for many of our students; however, parent diagnosed allergies will not be considered as a health care concern unless documentation is provided from a medical doctor.

There is a policy in place regarding prior approval for all foods brought to the school to share with classmates. The required Food Approval form is available on the school website under Nurse Notes. The form must be completed and submitted to the school nurse one week prior to the event. The school nurse will check for potential student allergy concerns. She will then forward the form to the homeroom teacher. If food comes to school without prior approval, the food will not be served.

### **Dental and Eye Appointments**

If the dentist has given a student a local anesthetic, the student may not return to school for **two hours** after the anesthetic has been administered. In addition, there should be no bleeding on return to school.

If a student has had his/her pupils dilated for any reason, he/she may not return to school until the following school day.

### **Serious Chronic Illnesses**

Parents are to inform the principal and nurse if their child has a serious and possibly life-threatening chronic illness or condition before entry into school. The school nurse will develop an "Individualized Health Care Plan" that will include instructions for observations of the illness, care and treatment, medication orders, and special instructions such as calling EMS or parent notification. "Individual Health Care Plan" forms are available in the Clinic.

If medications or treatments are involved, the "Scheduled and 'As-Needed' (PRN) Medication Permission Form" must be filled out and signed by the parent, and physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner and returned to the school. Any medication or equipment must be provided to the school by parents.

### **Immunization**

Students must be in compliance with the immunization requirements of the Texas Department of Health, Immunization Division. Immunization records from other countries need to be verified and signed by a U.S. physician.

The parent will be informed if a student is in need of immunizations. The student will be required to be in compliance within 14 days of the notice. If the student has not received the required immunization(s) within 14 days, the student will not be allowed to return to school until the school receives proof of the immunization(s).

Exemptions: St. Martha Catholic School will follow the exemptions for medical reasons allowed by the State of Texas:

To claim an exclusion for medical reasons, the student or students must present a statement signed by the student's physician (M.D. or D.O.), duly registered and licensed to practice medicine in the United States who has examined the student, in which it is stated that, in the physician's opinion, the vaccine required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the student or any member of the student's household. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only **one** year from the date signed by the physician.

### **Immunization Requirements**

On September 1, 2005, House Bill (HB) 1316 became law. This law requires that students attending all Texas schools must be vaccinated against invasive pneumococcal and hepatitis A diseases. The newest immunization law is in effect as of August 1, 2009. Five new vaccine requirements for school age students have been added and the vaccines affected are Hepatitis A, MMR, Varicella, Tdap, and Meningococcal.

The age groups newly affected are the Kindergarteners at age five (5) now requiring two (2) doses of MMR and students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade requiring a booster dose of Tdap only if has been five years or more since their last dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine. These new requirements must be fulfilled before a student is admitted to school on the first day of the school year. Students in Grades 8-12 will be required to have a booster dose of Tdap vaccine if it has been 10 years since their last dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine.

Please note that these specific types of immunizations are only applicable to students in specific age groups.

### **Medication in the School**

Our goal is to ensure school attendance for students who must use medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities or illness.

The daily routine of the clinic includes the management of medications. Catholic Schools of the Galveston-Houston Archdiocese adhere to Texas Education Code 22.052 on the administering of medications by school employees:

1. **Parents are encouraged to schedule the administration of student medicine in such a manner that medication brought to school will be kept to a minimum.** (For example, the physician may be able to prescribe the medication before/after school and at bedtime.)
2. **Medication (prescription or non-prescription) will be administered to students by the nurse/staff only upon written request and completion of the "Scheduled and 'As-Needed' (PRN) Medication Permission" form by the parent and physician.** This form is available from the school clinic. It is a required information sheet, kept on file, which details medication, prescribed dosage of medication, the time(s) of administration of medications, EXACT dates medication is to be given, liability release, and signature of the parent and physician. Parents or a designated adult must deliver and pick up medicine to be administered. If a form is not on file, a parent may administer the medication to the student only in the clinic in the presence of the nurse/staff.
3. **All medication, prescription or non-prescription, including cough drops, chap stick and over the counter medication, must be in its original container and be properly labeled in English.** A properly labeled prescription medication is one with a pharmacy label stating the student's name, the name of the medication, and date the prescription was filled. Non-prescription medication, including ibuprofen (Advil), acetaminophen (Tylenol), and cough drops, must be in the original container indicating directions for use and labeled with the student's name.
4. If there is a medication discrepancy that might be injurious to the student, the school nurse/principal designee has the responsibility to question the discrepancy or refuse to give medication. The school nurse/principal designee must document a consultation with the nurse consultant, student's physician, or parent.
5. All medication will be locked in a drawer/cabinet in the clinic unless refrigeration is required.
6. It is the responsibility of the student to report to the clinic at the appropriate time to take his/her medication.
7. At the end of the school year, the parent is to pick up any unused medication. Medication that is not picked up will be destroyed.
8. In the absence of the nurse, the principal or administrative designee may administer medication.
9. A Daily Log for Medication will be maintained for medication at school.
10. All medication must be given in the clinic. Parents are not allowed to administer medications in the Family Life Center (FLC), classrooms, or any other place on the school campus during school hours. The nurse must document medication given in the clinic by a parent.
11. **If a student needs crutches or any removable/non-removable casts or boots, a note from a physician is required prior to the student being admitted to class.**

12. Students needing to be excused from physical activities must have a note from a physician that states a specific diagnosis. The school nurse may need to verify the diagnosis with the physician. A doctor's note is required in order for the student to return to physical activities.

### **Health Screenings**

Students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, first, third, fifth, and seventh grades as well as all new students will have vision and hearing screenings. Acanthosis Nigricans screening are for students in first, third, fifth, and seventh grades. Spinal screenings are for students in fifth and eighth grades. These screenings are in compliance with the Texas Department of Health, Bureau of Students' Health requirements

Heights and weights are taken each year with the results recorded on the permanent medical card.

### **Medical Emergencies**

Each student must have a completed Student Emergency Information Card on file at the school. It must have the name of the student's physician, dentist, and a parent signature that gives St. Martha Catholic School the right to seek emergency medical care. The school will first attempt to contact the parent in an emergency; however, the school reserves the right to call an ambulance to transport the student in an emergency to seek appropriate medical care should it become necessary.

### **Pandemic Flu**

A pandemic flu is a global disease outbreak. A flu pandemic occurs when a new influenza virus emerges that people have little or no immunity to and for which there may be no vaccine. The disease spreads easily from person to person and causes serious illness.

St. Martha Catholic School will follow all infection control policies and procedures issued by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC). The Texas Department of Health (TDH) will issue all recommended closings for Harris County schools and we will follow these mandates and recommendations from this government agency. In the event the school will be closed due to a pandemic flu out-break, the school will communicate written policies and procedures to all parents and also put information on the school website for access.

### **Student Abuse and Neglect**

School personnel of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston have a moral obligation as well as a legal obligation to report student abuse and neglect. If a school staff member has "cause to believe" that abuse or neglect has occurred or will occur, they will report the incident to Child Protective Services (CPS). If a school staff member believes the student is in immediate danger of harm, 911 will be called. The school staff is trained annually to recognize and respond to signs of neglect and abuse in students. Students will receive student abuse awareness information according to age.

### **Insurance**

St. Martha Catholic School, through the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, provides a minimal secondary insurance plan for student accident coverage for all students enrolled in our school. This program will include secondary coverage for all registered students (Pre-K through 8) while attending or participating in school-sponsored and supervised activities on or off premises. The insurance is in excess of any other family primary coverage, but becomes primary if no other insurance is available.

### **Aerosol Products**

No aerosol products are allowed in the school environment due to safety and medical concerns.

### **No Smoking Policy**

St. Martha Catholic School is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on school property.

### **Asbestos**

St. Martha Catholic School has an asbestos report on file with the facility manager. The facility undergoes an asbestos review every three years and has been found to be asbestos free each time the review occurs.

**No Animals Policy**

For the safety of our students and visitors no animals are permitted on the school grounds.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of dangerous weather or fire, the school will follow the procedures that are in accordance with state, local, and Archdiocesan regulations. These procedures are practiced during drills conducted regularly throughout the school year to ensure that all students, faculty, and staff know what to do in case of an emergency. The drills practiced will be fire, tornado/hurricane, lockdown, and emergency preparedness.

**Flooding**

In the event of flooding, those parents who pick up their students at the west entrance park and walk location may still follow this procedure if accessible. If the park and walk entrance is not accessible, the car line route along Oak Shores will need to be utilized for *all students*.

Car line dismissal will occur **along Oak Shores Drive** and students will use the south entrance for exiting. There is a walkway at this location that will be utilized to facilitate getting the students into their cars.

**Emergency School Closing**

The school will use the IRIS (Immediate Response Information System) system which places calls and sends messages to your phone and e-mail with important information on emergency school closing and re-opening. If it becomes necessary to evaluate the closing of the school at any time because of inclement weather or any other emergency, St. Martha Catholic School will generally follow the decision of Humble I.S.D.

**Emergency Dismissal**

A procedure is in place that will be followed in order to ensure all students are picked up by parents and accounted for by the school staff. In an emergency, we will dismiss from the best suited facility on campus given the circumstances. Parents will have to follow the directions issued through the IRIS alert. Parents/emergency contacts will need to sign out students. Faculty and staff will have sign out sheets ready to be signed by parent or parent designee at the dismissal location.

**Please be patient as this will be a slower dismissal process.**

**Inclement Weather Procedure**

A decision will be made by the principal to open the school on time, open late, or close for the day. Local television and radio stations will carry information on early morning news should there be a closing or late opening of school.

**LISTEN TO THE LOCAL TV AND RADIO STATIONS. IF THE HUMBLE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS CLOSED, ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL WILL BE CLOSED. PARENTS WILL BE CONTACTED VIA THE IRIS SYSTEM TO COMMUNICATE A SCHOOL CLOSING.**

**FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips serve the educational instruction program and fulfill the learning objectives of the curriculum by taking advantage of the educational resources of the surrounding community.

Field trips are privileges afforded to students; no student has an absolute right to attend a field trip. Students who have received an "N" or a "U" in conduct may be considered ineligible to attend the field trip. Eligibility will be determined by the school administration. If a student is not permitted to attend the field trip due to school disciplinary reasons, the student must attend school that day and the school will place the student in another class for the length of the field trip. Fees for field trips are based on the number of students attending; therefore, it is important for parents to notify the school immediately if they do not wish their student to attend so costs may be adjusted with the remaining parents. Each class generally attends only one field trip per year due to the high cost of

bus transportation from our location. Students who are absent on the day of a scheduled field trip will not be refunded monies due to the absence. All field trip fees are based on full class participation.

If a parent chooses not to send a student on a field trip, the student will be counted as absent and must stay home with the parent; this includes Camp Kappe and the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip. The parent must provide a written note to the school stating the student will not attend the field trip. If the student is not able to attend a field trip due to medical reasons, a note from the student's primary care physician stating the specific medical restrictions must be submitted to the school nurse at least four days prior to the field trip. Once verification is completed by the school nurse, the student will be permitted to attend school in a lower grade and will need to complete assignments prepared by the homeroom teacher.

Field trip attire is the current spirit shirt with long blue jeans (with no tears, rips, or markings) or school uniform pants, shorts, or skirts, unless indicated otherwise on the field trip permission slip.

Parents will be requested to sign a permission slip to indicate their willingness for the student to participate in class trips. According to state law, students are not allowed to attend a field trip without written permission from the parents. No phone permissions are allowed. **NO EXCEPTION WILL BE MADE**

If parent chaperones are needed on grade level field trips, there will be a limit to the number needed. If parent chaperones are needed, they will be chosen through a lottery system. **If a parent is chaperoning, siblings of students or other guests may not attend the field trip. Field trip chaperones must be Virtus-trained parents.**

If a student becomes ill on a field trip, the parent will be notified to pick up the student at the location of the field trip.

## EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The school offers the following extracurricular activities:

- Band Grades 4 - 8
- Baseball – Boys Grades 6 - 8
- Basketball - Girls and boys Grades 5 - 8
- Chess Club/Team Grades 4 - 8
- Choir Grades 3 - 8
- Drama Club Grades 4 - 8
- National Junior Beta Club Grades 5 - 8
- Rosary Guild Grades 3 - 8
- Soccer – Co-ed Grades 6 - 8
- Softball – Girls Grades 6 - 8
- Spanish Club Grades 5 - 8
- Student Council Grades 6 - 8
- Track/Cross Country - Co-ed Grades 5 - 8
- Volleyball - Girls Grades 6 - 8

### **Eligibility**

In order to participate in all extracurricular activities except the National Junior Beta Club, a student shall maintain at least a passing grade in each subject and satisfactory conduct in each subject and in homeroom. Eligibility will be checked when progress reports and report cards are distributed.

Since the National Junior Beta Club is a national organization, eligibility will be in accordance with their standards.

### **Games and Events**

Parents are responsible for the supervision of students who attend games or events after school hours. All students attending games or events must be supervised by the parent or an adult appointed by the parent. The behavior of any student attending a game or event must comply with the rules and regulations of the school. Students who

misbehave at games or events are subject to disciplinary action. Students who have been absent from school on the day of the game, practice, or event will be ineligible to participate in that day's practice, game or event.

### **Athletic Handbook**

A separate handbook is linked to the school website which details school athletic information on sports, code of conduct, eligibility, etc.

## **COUNSELING SUPPORT SERVICES**

St. Martha Catholic School currently has a part-time school counselor who serves as a support service to address student needs. The counseling program consists of individual counseling opportunities as well as classroom guidance lessons.

The counselor uses classroom guidance lessons as a means to develop personal growth and contribute to academic success for all students. At St. Martha, guidance counseling lessons vary by grade level but may address academic/educational goals and habits, career and occupational lessons, personal and social skills activities and safety.

Our counseling program also affords our students the opportunity for individual or group counseling to address immediate concerns or to assist a student to be more successful in the learning process. Counseling services are available to any student who has written permission on file. Additional parental permission will be requested for participating in any group counseling.

Consultation with teachers and parents is often a component of our school counseling program and can further assist our students in being more successful in the school environment.

Parents are encouraged to call and speak with the school counselor to address any questions or concerns or to make a referral for their student.

Student confidentiality is important to our school staff; however, if any staff member, including the counselor, is made aware that a student is a danger to himself or herself or others or is being harmed, abused or neglected, we will be required to take appropriate action."

## **LUNCH PROGRAM AND VISITOR POLICY**

The school uses Geomar Catering as the hot lunch vendor for this year. Parents may pre-order lunches directly through Geomar. **All lunches are pre-paid online. No cash or checks will be collected at school for lunches.** In an emergency, a basic lunch of a cheese sandwich, chips, and milk will be charged to the family. **Lunches must be ordered online at least 48 hours in advance through Geomar.**

Geomar offers a daily set lunch menu as well as a-la-carte items. Geomar will post future menus by the last week of the month and lunches must be ordered on-line. Geomar serves freshly prepared products from the St. Martha FLC. Geomar will not carry over accounts to another day, so all purchased lunches will be served on the day the lunch is ordered during that month as food is prepared daily according to the online purchase.

**Lunch accounts not current with Geomar Catering will result in progress and report cards being withheld.**

Lunch Times: 10:55 a.m. to 11:25 a.m. - Kindergarten – 2<sup>nd</sup> grades  
11:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. - Pre-K (in the classroom)  
11:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon - 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades  
12:10 p.m. to 12:40 p.m. - 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades

Parents and other guests eating with a student in the FLC must be Virtus trained and must check in at the office prior to the student's scheduled lunch time. Parents who bring siblings to eat lunch with a student must check out a student and eat at the outside picnic tables. Parents who want to eat lunch with their child(ren) during a "lunch in

the classroom” day, may sign a student out in the office and eat at the outside picnic tables. **Parents may not eat lunch in the classrooms with a student.** Lunch is in the classroom on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays of the month and on other occasions as necessary. It is a benefit to the students to develop social skills with their classmates. Parents should limit the number of times they attend lunch with a student during the school year. VIRTUS-trained parents and other guests may accompany students during lunch in the FLC a maximum of one time per week throughout the school year. Please do not bring any food for students other than your child. Birthday treats are an exception. A parent may bring birthday treats for their child’s homeroom class only, and the items must be from the approved food list with prior notification to the homeroom teacher. Lunch visits are to be with your child only.

Parents should try to pack healthy lunches for school lunches. **Sodas are not allowed for students in Pre-Kindergarten through 7<sup>th</sup> grade.**

Food Allergy Note: Geomar Catering does not serve peanut products, but cannot guarantee that foods purchased have not come in contact with nut products during the manufacturing process.

***Due to the numerous food allergies present in our student body, any food brought to share with classmates must be pre-approved through the school nurse. See details under “Clinic Policies.”***

### **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM (BASP)**

Before and After School Program (BASP) is a before and after school program available from 7:00 – 7:30 a.m. and from 3:15 – 6:00 p.m. on Monday – Thursday and 2:15 – 6:00 p.m. on Fridays. BASP consists of play, study time, snacks, and activities.

**The Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office requires that all students have on file a completed BASP registration form regardless of whether you intend to use the program or not. If you intend to use the program, the annual \$20 registration fee must accompany the registration form. The registration and medical forms and the parent contract are available on the school website and in the school office.**

In order for the school to have the appropriate personnel to student ratio, students utilizing BASP *must be registered for a specific day(s) for the afternoon program.* In case of emergencies, if an additional day of BASP is required, please contact the school office.

#### **Program Options and Fees**

- Annual BASP Registration Fee (nonrefundable): **\$20 per child must accompany current year’s registration form**
- Refer to BASP information form for complete program rates and options

**Morning Program:** The morning program can be used on an as-needed basis, but the student must be registered in BASP before they start to attend the morning program. The family will be invoiced once a month except for the months of May and June. The invoices will be issued by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month and payment will be due by the 10<sup>th</sup>. For the month of May an invoice will be issued on **May 16, 2017, covering May 1-12, 2017.** ***Any student utilizing the morning program from May 15-June 2, 2017, must pay in advance or on the day that the program is used.***

**Please refer to the BASP information form for fees.**

- **Afternoon Program:** The afternoon program offers the options of three (3) days per week, five (5) days per week, and a drop-in option. See the BASP information form for options and rates. Fees are based on a monthly rate. Payment must be made in advance by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month. The only exception will be the month of August **2016.** Please see section below **“August 2016 and June 2017 Afternoon Program Invoicing.”** Once you have registered your child for the five (5) day or three (3) day program, the above fees will be due

whether your child attends on the days specified or not. If a student registered for the three (3) day program attends any additional days, the additional days will be billed at the “Drop-In” rate of \$15 per day.

- **Drop-In Option:** If a student is not signed up for the three (3) or five (5) day programs, the student will be considered a “drop in.” Refer to BASP information form for drop-in rates. The family will be invoiced according to the number of days used. Invoices will be issued once a month except for the months of May and June. The invoices will be issued by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month and payment will be due by the 10<sup>th</sup>. For the month of May an invoice will be issued on **May 16, 2017, covering May 1-12, 2017.** **For any student utilizing the “Drop In” program from May 15-31, 2017, payment must be made in advance or on the day that the program is used.**
- **August 2016 and June 2017 Afternoon Program Invoicing:** The daily fees for **August 2016** will be as follows: \$10 for one child, \$15 for two children, \$20 for three children and an additional \$7 for each additional child. There will be no afternoon BASP for June 2017.
- **Pick Up and Late Fees:** All children must be picked up by 6 p.m. Per the BASP information form a late fee per child will be invoiced via email for pick up between 6:00 and 6:15 p.m. for all programs. After 6:15 p.m., an additional fee of \$1 per minute per child will be invoiced per the BASP information form.

The rates on the BASP information form apply for all 3:15 p.m. and 2:15 p.m. dismissals  
BASP telephone number after hours: 281-358-5523, Ext. 320

### **Financial Policy**

- All payments must be made to the school office by personal check, money order, cashier’s check, credit card or ACH. No cash will be accepted. Credit cards are subject to a 2.75 percent processing fee. ACH payments will begin in September; therefore BASP August fees may not be paid through ACH. ACH is only available for students registered in the five (5) day and three (3) day programs where the monthly payment is made in advance.
- A late charge may be added after the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month per the BASP information form. BASP payments not received in the office by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month may result in the child not being admitted to BASP.
- There is a \$25 charge for checks returned due to insufficient funds. If a check is returned, payment in the future will need to be in the form of a cashier’s check or money order.
- Report cards (including Progress Reports) will be withheld due to unpaid financial obligations to the school and access to the electronic will be blocked.

**Dismissal for extra-curricular activities: If a student needs to attend any extra-curricular activity during BASP written instructions must be sent by the parent to the BASP coordinator.**

## **LOCAL ADVISORY BOARD**

St. Martha Catholic School Local Advisory Board is advisory and consultative to the Principal/Pastor. The local advisory board assists the Principal/Pastor in policy recommendation and articulating the educational needs and aspirations of the school and school community.

Serving on the local advisory board is a ministry. Members provide a service for our Catholic school. Members should never be motivated to serve on the board for the purpose of accomplishing personal agenda items. A member who offers to serve needs to be open-minded, and use data to make informed decisions. The member must keep in mind the overall good of the school as the basis upon which to make a decision. A board member has no authority as an individual. Only when the Board meets as a group, does the person function as a board member. Board members do not serve as conduits to the administration for parents who have questions, complaints, and/or concerns. Board members must always refer such calls to the appropriate person. An explicit chain-of-command must be followed or parents will not be communicating with the appropriate school representative.



The Local Advisory Board advises and gives guidance in the areas of financial viability and accountability of the school, short and long-term planning, teacher compensation scales, fundraising, development and public relations. They also participate in the Principal Professional Growth process. The board does not discipline students, develop curriculum, approve instructional materials, hire/fire staff, or write regulations on the implementation of policies or handle grievances.

Persons in the following categories may NOT be considered as candidates for the Board:

- Employees of the parish and school, whether teaching or non-teaching personnel
- Spouses, students, or siblings of employees of the parish/school
- More than one member of an immediate family at a time
- Board members or professional educators of another school or school system

Discernment is the formal process used in May to select new Local Advisory Board members. Each board member discerned serves a term of three years and may serve up to two terms. Meetings are held the second Monday of each month at 6:00 pm in the school library or parish administration office with the exception of July.

Local Advisory Board meetings are open meetings. Anyone may address the Board provided he/she has given a written request to the principal ten working days prior to a scheduled meeting. Presentations to the Board must follow these guidelines:

- Have a ten minute time limit
- Nothing of a confidential nature should be addressed such as discipline problems or personal issues  
The president or pastor may at any time stop the presentation if it is of a sensitive nature.
- No discussions will follow the presentation
- Response will be given in writing by the board president in consensus with the principal and pastor

## VOLUNTEERS

### **PLUS Volunteers**

“People, Parishioners and Parents Lending Useful Support” is the name of our volunteer organization. This organization provides support to programs and volunteer efforts at St. Martha Catholic School. The basic purpose of the volunteer organization is to be of service to St. Martha Catholic School by assisting with annual fundraisers and volunteering on committees to help support school programs and events.

**All volunteers must complete VIRTUS training** per the Archdiocesan requirements (see VIRTUS TRAINING REQUIREMENT section on page 42 of this handbook).

Volunteers and visitors on the school campus must also:

- Sign in and out of the visitor’s log in the office and acquire a visitor’s sticker
- Wear the visitor’s sticker so you may be easily identified by faculty and staff
- Protect confidentiality of students and staff
- Make other arrangements for siblings when volunteering at the school
- Notify the **PLUS coordinator** to reserve a room for a volunteer meeting
- Accept and sign an ethics agreement before gaining access to school information systems and networks

Each year the **PLUS coordinator** will solicit candidates to serve as PLUS Chairs. A volunteer may serve up to three consecutive years as a PLUS Chair. Serving as a PLUS Chair is a ministry. Volunteers should never be motivated to serve as a PLUS Chair for the purpose of accomplishing personal agenda items. PLUS Chairs do not serve as conduits to the administration for parents who have questions, complaints, and/or concerns.

**PLUS Chairs:** Rebate and Redemption/Recycled Uniform, HRPC Coordinator, Hospitality, Community Life, Spirit Shop, Photography, Vocations and Religious Programs, and Alumni.

The PLUS Volunteer Organizational Chart, which outlines the committees and subcommittees, is located on the St. Martha Website at [www.stmarthacs.org](http://www.stmarthacs.org) under the heading section "Parents." The PLUS Volunteer information can be found within this section on the website.

Please contact the **PLUS coordinator** for further information and volunteer opportunities.

## VIRTUS TRAINING REQUIREMENT

**VIRTUS is an Archdiocesan-wide program and is a mandatory** program required to be completed for all school and parish staff or volunteers who have regular contact with students. The program consists of three parts:

- Criminal Background Check
- *Protecting God's Children* workshop (three-hour training)
- *Keeping the Promise Alive* workshop (refresher course required after five years of completing the Protecting God's Children program).

*Protecting God's Children* and *Keeping the Promise Alive* are workshops for adults on the subject of child abuse. These workshops focus on the harm of child sexual abuse, the warning signs of sexual abuse, what each person must do to prevent it, and the policies of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston for reporting it.

Keeping the Promise Alive is a 1.5 hour session with one video that is taken by employees/volunteers after five years of taking the Protecting God's Children® program. It provides ongoing awareness for the prevention of child sexual abuse. The material covered in Keeping the Promise Alive is designed to identify and reinforce the lessons of the original Protecting God's Children program by clarifying some of the more challenging aspects of the sessions and strengthening the participants' ability to recognize risky adults in their environments and take action to intervene in potentially threatening situations.

Persons required to complete the VIRTUS training include, but are not limited to, the following:

- School staff
- Lunchroom company employees
- Sports coaches
- Room parents
- Field trip chaperones
- Library volunteers
- Workroom volunteers
- Classroom volunteers
- Classroom party volunteers and other attendees
- Special events volunteers
- Extra-curricular activities volunteers
- Parents, family members and guests who visit the school for lunch with a student

Please notify the school office once you have completed a VIRTUS training workshop so the school records may be updated.

## USE OF SCHOOL LOGOS

St. Martha Catholic School logos may not be used in any form on any materials without the express written consent of the principal.

## TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY STATEMENT

St. Martha Catholic School is pleased to offer students access to technology resources for educational purposes, which may include computer hardware and software licensed to the school. To gain access to the technology resources, all students must obtain parental permission as verified by the signatures on this agreement. Should a

parent prefer that a student not have e-mail and Internet access, use of the computer is still possible for more traditional purposes such as word processing.

### **Internet**

St. Martha Catholic School provides security and filtering technology in order to reduce the amount of SPAM, spyware and to restrict access to inappropriate websites. These tools do not guarantee that all inappropriate content will be blocked.

Access to Internet will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, museums, and other repositories of information. FAMILIES SHOULD BE AWARE THAT SOME MATERIAL ACCESSIBLE VIA THE INTERNET MAY CONTAIN ITEMS THAT ARE ILLEGAL, DEFAMATORY, INACCURATE, OR POTENTIALLY OFFENSIVE. While the purpose of the school is to use Internet resources for constructive educational goals, students may find ways to access other materials. We believe that the benefits to students from access to the Internet outweigh the disadvantages. Ultimately, however, parents of minors are responsible for setting and conveying the standards that their students should follow when using media and information sources. Therefore, we support and respect each family's right to decide whether or not to allow for access.

### **Expectation for Students' Behavior**

Students are responsible for appropriate behavior on the school's computer network just as they are in a classroom or on a school playground. Communications on the network are often public in nature. General school rules for behavior and communications apply. It is expected that users will comply with Archdiocesan standards and the specific rules set forth below. The use of technology resources is a privilege, not a right, and may be revoked if abused. The user is personally responsible for his/her actions in accessing and utilizing the school's technology resources. The students are expected never to access, keep, or send anything that they would not want their parents or teachers to see.

### **Rules of Appropriate Use**

#### **Electronic Communication**

Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of electronic communication jeopardizes the safe environment of the school or is contrary to Gospel values, the student can be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including the expulsion of the student.

This policy applies to communications or depictions through email, text messages, or web site postings, whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through private communication.

**Personal Safety and Personal Privacy** - Students will not post personal contact information about themselves. Personal contact information includes their address, telephone, school address, etc. This information may not be provided to an individual, organization, or company, including web sites that solicit personal information.

**Social Media** - Accessing social media websites (i.e. Myspace, Facebook, Friendster, tagged, etc.) is **strictly prohibited** on school property. The circumvention of the school's network security is prohibited. Social Media refers to the means of interactions among people in which they create, share and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks.

The school or parish owns the school and school's name, and administrators have the right to prohibit the unauthorized use of images, names and logos including on social media websites.

The school administration will impose consequences for inappropriate conduct as determined by the administration regarding the use of social media. What students/faculty/staff/parents do off-campus can detrimentally affect the reputation of St. Martha Catholic School. The school administration reserves the right to discipline students for off-campus conduct that is derogatory or inflammatory regarding the school, its faculty, administration, or priests. Deliberate defamation of others is not consistent with Christian values, and all should be held accountable for intentional harm they cause others.

***Many parents do not give permission for their student's photographed/videoed image to be placed in any public venue, website, blog, or social networking sites. When parents video school events, it must be for***

***personal use only. Posting the images to any publicly viewed site is prohibited as permission from all parents has not been secured. If this policy is abused and the school becomes aware of such, then photographing/videoing school events will be prohibited in the future.***

**Illegal copying** - Students should never download or install any commercial software, shareware, or freeware onto network drives, travel drives, or disks. Students should never copy other people's work or intrude into other people's files. The download/upload of any material in violation of any U.S., state, board, Archdiocesan, or school policy is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted materials, material protected by trade secret, and threatening, violent, or obscene material.

**Inappropriate materials or language** - Profane, abusive or impolite language should not be used to communicate nor should materials be accessed which are not in line with the rules of school behavior. Use of technology resources for gambling, chain letter communication, unauthorized email, chat or instant message, blogs, and discussion forums, is also prohibited. A good rule to follow is that students never view, send, or access materials which they would not want their teachers or parents to see. Should students encounter such material by accident, they should report it to their teacher immediately.

**Right to Terminate Student Use of Technology** - The use of the Internet and related technologies is a privilege, not a right; and inappropriate use may result in cancellation of those privileges. The administrator or designee may deny, revoke, or suspend a specific user's access to the Internet and related technologies due to unacceptable use.

## **SCHOOL CALENDAR**

Please view the 2016-2017 SMCS Calendar at: <http://stmarthacs.org/documents/2016/4/16-17%20Calendar%20for%20website-1.pdf>



**PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE  
BY MONDAY, AUGUST 22, 2016**

**ST. MARTHA CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
2016-2017 TECHNOLOGY USER AGREEMENT & PARENT PERMISSION**

These are guidelines to ensure continued technology privileges at school.

1. Do not use technology to harm other people or their work.
2. **Do not post pictures/videos from school events on any online avenue as many parents do not give permission for their student's image to be viewed by others.**
3. Do not damage the network or any technology resource in any way.
4. Do not interfere with the network or computer operation by installing any form of software or permitting the spread of computer viruses.
5. Do not violate copyright laws.
6. Do not view, send or display offensive messages or pictures.
7. Do not share your password or in any way obtain another person's password.
8. Do not waste technology resources such as disk space or printing supplies.
9. Do not trespass in another's folders, work or files.
10. Notify an adult immediately if you encounter materials which violate the *Rules of Appropriate Use* (Parent-Student Handbook, page 43).
11. BE PREPARED to be held accountable for your actions and for the loss of privileges if the *Rules of Appropriate Use* (Parent-Student Handbook, page 43) are violated.
12. Students in Grades 1-5 will be issued a flash drive for use at school. Student work will be saved on these flash drives. If the flash drive is lost or damaged during the year, a new flash drive must be purchased from the school at the cost of \$10.

**Whether occurring within or outside of school, when a student's use of technology jeopardizes the safe environment of the school, students or staff contrary to Gospel values, the student will be subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences including expulsion. This policy applies to all electronic communications or depictions whether they occur through the school's equipment or connectivity resources or through personal electronic devices.**

**As a parent and student(s) of St. Martha Catholic School, we have read the Technology Acceptable Use Policy Statement section on page 42 in the Parent-Student Handbook and the information on this technology user agreement. We understand this agreement will be kept on file in the school office. Questions should be directed to the principal for clarification.**

My student(s) may use the Internet while at school according to the rules outlined.  Yes  No

**I understand that the school may wish to publish examples of student projects, photographs of students and other work on an Internet accessible World Wide Web server. This includes the Crusader Newsletter that is posted on the school website, pictures on the school website and all other publications created or utilized by the school.**

My student's/students' work may be published on the school website/Internet  Yes  No

Photographs of my student(s) may be used or published in hard copy and/or online publications.  Yes  No

These publications include: SMCS website, Crusader Newsletter, SMCS Annual Report, SMCS Facebook pages, SMCS marketing materials, Instagram, St. Martha Catholic Church parish and Archdiocesan publications and Kingwood and Houston community newspapers.

**Please Note: If you check "No" to this question, your student's/students' face(s) will be blocked out of group pictures published in school newsletters and all other publications.**

Parent Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

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

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \* \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \* \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \* \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \* \_\_\_\_\_

*\*Student signature required for each student in Grades 3 – 8.*

School Copy Received By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_