

ST. MARY SCHOOL

CHRIST CENTERED EDUCATION



Elementary Parent Handbook

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Letter of Welcome

Dear Parents,

We are pleased that you have chosen St. Mary School as your child's school. We consider it a privilege to share the responsibility of training your child. The Bible is our guidebook which serves as our set of rules and shows us how to live the Christian life. Our prayer for your family is that God's word will have a strong impact upon your life. Since school is considered an extension of home, it is imperative that parents create an atmosphere at home that is supportive of St. Mary School and its goals.

Affiliation

We are part of the Coptic Orthodox Dioceses of California and Hawaii.

History & Philosophy

St. Mary School was founded in 2005, with a philosophy to raise well-rounded Christian children. Trusting that the Lord Christ Himself is the center and the heart of a child from the early beginning, they will grow to become a positive addition to our community and society.

Our school philosophy is 'Christ Centered Education' where each child will participate in a developmentally enriched program that helps the child to grow spiritually, academically, intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of St. Mary School to educate and develop the whole person for the glory of God through adherence to Biblical principles. The school will strive to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to the highest gain of knowledge and skill.

St. Mary School desires to meet the needs of the whole child and to promote spiritual and moral growth, academic and intellectual progress, and physical and social development. Our emphasis is high quality education combined with the knowledge that God's principles are the confirming basis for our action and understanding. The school's goal is to reach the academic disciplines and independent study thoroughly. St. Mary School desires to send young people into the world who will be confident, devout Christian leaders.

Loving God, the Church, family and our country are the primary concerns of our pilgrim fathers in the education of our children. Students at St. Mary School will be taught of our nation's heritage, constitution and flag.

Teachers and Staff members function as role models for students. The professional preparation of the instructional staff is a part of the school's testimony and its commitment to parents to provide quality instruction for its students. We offer large and well-equipped classrooms, but we keep class sizes small in order to provide personal attention to each child.

St. Mary School has the responsibility to provide the best education possible. As Christian educators, we desire to teach each student to accept individual responsibility to God for their actions and to challenge them to glorify God in every facet of the child's life.

Statement of Faith

We believe that the early school years play a very important role in one's life. Our goal is to provide a Christian environment for the children with a strong academic foundation. We believe that Christians should be imitators for Christ, hence providing Christian education and environment will greatly help to achieve this goal. We believe that love is the greatest commandment and the best way to teach it is to provide it for the little children, while providing best teaching practices.

Our Core Religious Beliefs could be summarized as:

- * The Holy Bible is God's inspired words.
- * We proclaim the Holy Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit) is one Godhead.
- * We believe that Christ is the only begotten Son of God.
- * We believe that Christ, the Son of God, came to the world, took flesh, crucified and died on the cross, resurrected and ascended into heaven. That He (Christ) will come again, to judge the living and the dead.
- * We believe that our salvation is by God's grace and that one's faith should result in works and Christian life.

Student Goals of Understanding

1. The Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God, thus developing attitudes of love and respect toward it.
2. The basic doctrine of the Bible.
3. To teach Biblical character qualities and provide opportunities for the student to demonstrate these qualities.
4. To teach the student to treat everyone with love and respect as unique individuals created in God's image.
5. To teach the student how to become a contributing member of society by realizing his/her needs to serve others.
6. Creative thinking and educational building blocks prepare them for the future.
7. To teach the student physical fitness, good healthy habits, and wise use of the body as a Temple of God.

Administration

St. Mary School is a non-profit corporation. The pastor, school board, and the administrator are responsible for setting all the policies of the school. The administrator implements these principles and policies in daily operations.

Elementary Hours of Operation

Saint Mary School is open Monday - Friday from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm. There is also an After-School program available from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

Age of Children Accepted for Elementary

Elementary is for children above the age 6 years old by December 1st.

Food and Beverage Provisions

St. Mary School will provide a morning snack and hot lunch.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

St. Mary School admits students of any race, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin. It does not discriminate based on race, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its education policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, athletic and other school-administered programs.

Admission Policy and Procedures

Registration is based on the available spaces, the child's age and how the child fits into the academic and social development at St. Mary School. Each parent/guardian must fill out and sign a *completed* Elementary Application of Admission with all appropriate attachments and forms by the first day of school.

A pre-admission conference will be scheduled with the Principal. This meeting will give the parent/ guardian and child the opportunity to get acquainted with St. Mary School, the goals, philosophy, and policies of the program. It will also give Principal of St. Mary School the opportunity to know the child and parent/guardian better. A standard assessment is required before admission.

Enrollment Procedures

1. The completion and submission of the Elementary Application of Admission and payment of registration fee.
2. Full monthly tuition to be paid by the first day of school.
3. Signed Parent Handbook.
4. Transfer of Records from the previous school and submission of proper health records.

Tuition Payment and Rules

See Tuition Agreement attached to the enrollment packet

Health - When to Stay at Home

When students are ill to attend classes, arrangements must be made for the parents to come and get them. **DO NOT SEND CHILDREN TO SCHOOL WITH A FEVER OR COLD.** Good attendance is vital but not when it may jeopardize the health of others. If your child becomes ill at school, we will notify you as soon as possible. The best place for a sick child is at home, in the care of a loved one. If you think that your child may be ill, check with your doctor before sending him/her to school. Children should stay home 24 hours after the last episode. Some signs of illness are as follows:

1. Fever
2. Sore Throat
3. Rash
4. Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea
5. Red Watery Eyes
6. Facial Swelling
7. Flushed Face

The school will administer prescription medication prescribed by a physician only. A Consent for Administration of Medication Form must be completed and signed by the parent / guardian before any medication can be given to a child.

The medication must be in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's name, physician's name, type of medicine, and the dose. A medicine measuring cup or dropper is required. All items must be placed inside a labeled Ziploc bag and kept in the office not with the child.

Services to be Provided if a Child has a Medical or Dental Emergency

In case of an emergency such as a child becomes ill or sustains an injury more serious than a minor scratch, the child's parent/ guardian will be immediately notified.

If the parents or guardian cannot be reached, the next person on the child's Health and Emergency Form will be contacted.

St. Mary School will arrange for obtaining medical treatment of any child if necessary, without specific instructions if the child's parent / guardian cannot be reached and if the nature of the illness or injury should not be delayed.

In case of serious injury or illness, 911 will be called.

Custody-Parent Visitation Rights

In most cases, when parents are divorced, both mother and father continue to have equal rights to their children. However, if you have legal papers that limit the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, please provide a copy to the school. Unless this information is in the child's file in the school office, equal rights will be provided to both parents.

Attendance

Here at St. Mary School, we want to emphasize the importance of **attendance and on-time arrival to school and in life.**

Frequent absenteeism and habitual tardiness are detrimental to a student's academic and character development. It instills poor time-management skills that could affect a child's future school performance and job success. It has been shown that students who are frequently tardy have lower GPAs, lower scores on standardized assessments, and lower graduation rates. Chronic tardiness in elementary and middle school is also linked to failure in high school.

Punctuality is a character trait and a habit that our students need to learn and adopt. It displays a person's respect for people and time.

Regular attendance and on-time arrival are expected of each student.

Absences

Acceptable absences are illness, medical/dental appointment, religious holydays, and illness or death in the immediate family. These reasons are considered "excused" absences.

If a parent(s) chooses to have a student absent for reasons other than the above, these absences are considered "unexcused". **A student is permitted to have only five "unexcused absences—no penalty" per semester.** The sixth absence during a semester will become an "unexcused absence—with penalty." This penalty affects the student's citizenship grade.

Work must be made up when the student returns to school.

If a student is absent, we request that the parent call the Office before 8:00 A.M. School notification is necessary in order to avoid being absent.

Excessive absences are defined to be those, which cause a student to be out of school more than 10 days per semester. Students who have excessive absences may be placed on probation. In order to be promoted to the next grade, a student must not be absent more than 24 days in a school year unless a waiver is granted by the administration.

Partial Day Attendance

Students who leave school before the end of the day, must be signed out by the person picking them up. Students will be called from class once the authorized person arrives. The person picking up a student must be listed on the emergency card or have written permission from a parent or guardian with custodial rights.

Partial day attendance will only be classified as “excused” based on the absence excuse policy listed above.

Parents must inform the office of an early pick-up.

Absence Excuses

Students who have been absent must bring to the office a written note from the parent or guardian giving the following information:

Student’s full name

Date/dates of absence or Time absent in case of partial day’s absence

Reason for absence

Parent signature

Students returning to school after a communicable disease (i.e. chicken pox, measles, lice, etc.) are required to bring a doctor’s release note to be able to resume regular school schedule. In the event of a prolonged illness, we ask that parents give us the expected duration of the absence.

Tardiness

A student will be considered tardy after 8:15 AM. If a student arrives after, they must enter school through the office in order to go to class. Parents are not allowed to accompany students to the classroom if they are late. This will cause an interruption of class time and learning.

Students will be allowed five tardies with no consequences per semester. Beginning with the sixth tardy, a parent will be contacted. On the seventh tardy, a parent/student/Principal conference may be required.

After the seventh tardy, a student will be considered absent and this will result in a lower citizenship grade on the student’s report card. They will not be allowed to attend the class that they are late to and any work missed, or test given in that class will be recorded as a 59% F and cannot be made up. Habitual tardiness, much like frequent absenteeism, is detrimental to a student’s academic progress and their character development.

Tardies will only be classified as “excused” based on the absence excuse policy listed above.

***Students WILL NOT be released before 2:30 pm of the instructional day.**

Homework and Make-Up Work

Homework is a mandatory part of the educational process. It will be assigned in most cases on a variable basis, and some work should be expected each night. Extra homework time should be expected when students are absent and need to make up work for students who are absent.

Special Events / Holiday Closings

Tuition will remain the same during periods that contain closings for holidays (see Special Events and Holidays Calendar on our website). Designated holidays are subject to change. Please watch for notices when the holidays are approaching.

Contact with the Child's Parent / Guardian

- * If redirection, distraction, active listening and time out are used and the child's conduct presents any health or safety hazard to himself/ herself or to other children, the school will contact the parent / guardian.
- * The Principal will observe the child and record any incident or accident that may happen, after the second incident the Principal will have a conference with the parent / guardian, at which the student will be put on probation. If a third incident occurred the student will be expelled.

Grounds of Dismissal

Any offense during the probationary period may result in the termination of the child's enrollment at St. Mary's School.

Reasons for Termination

- * If the child's behavior presents a health or safety hazard for himself / herself or to other children.
- * If the child is left after the school closing time, 6:00 pm, more than 5 times in the school year calendar.
- * If the parent / guardian has been charged a late tuition fee more than three times during one school year calendar.

Uniforms - Clothing Requirements

- * All students must wear a white, navy or blue polo shirt and navy or khaki bottoms.
- * Navy or Khaki shorts and skirts are allowed. Shorts and skirts must be long enough to reach the student's fingertips with arms to one side.
- * Shoes and socks must be worn at all times. Platform or chunky heels are not allowed. No open sandals or heels. Shoes must be a neutral color. Socks must be white and must show above shoes.
- * Pants must be worn at one's waist. Baggy or torn pants are not allowed. No jeans or black pants allowed.
- * Sweaters that are neutral colors can be worn. Sweaters that do not fit this criterion are not allowed. Students can wear raincoats that are different colors
- * Hair should be neat, well groomed. No unusual hair colors, i.e.: purple green, blue, etc.
- * Students are not allowed to wear nail polish or makeup

X

Parent/ Guardian signature