



Making the Transition



from Elementary School to Middle School



A Guide for Middle School

Students at

St. Mary's School



St Mary's Catholic School



St. Mary's Philosophy

St. Mary's School has a strong commitment and responsibility to be caring, sharing, and witnessing community of faith guided by the Gospel message, rooted in Catholic tradition. We create an accepting environment in which students are challenged academically and spiritually to develop their talents to their fullest potential. We strive to teach the value of community service as well as to raise an awareness of peace and justice issues in our world today.

St. Mary's Mission Statement

St. Mary's School in Bird Island serves the area students in kindergarten through eighth grade by providing a Christ-centered Catholic education where academic excellence, self-worth and faith development go hand in hand in a safe environment.

St. Mary's School
Where Academics and Faith
Go Hand in Hand

Ms. Tracy Bertrand Sigurdson, Principal

140 South 10th Street

PO Box 500

Bird Island, MN 55310

320-365-3693

Fax: 320-365-3142

Email: tbertrand@stmarysbi.com

Website: www.stmarysschoolbirdisland.com

St. Mary's is a Bully-Free Zone

What is Bullying?

- *any negative word, look, sign or act that hurts a person's body, dignity or things
- *interferes with a person's education
- *includes an imbalance of power

Our School's Anti-Bullying Rules

- ***We will NOT bully others.***
- ***We will try to help students who are being bullied.***
- ***We will try to include students who are left out.***
- ***If we know that somebody is being bullied,
we will tell an adult at school and at home.***

Congratulations! You've made it to Middle School! So welcome to Middle School at St. Mary's. We would like to share this information with you to help you prepare for the transition.

The material included in this booklet will provide you with vital information about the school day and basic procedures for making the coming school year successful.

We welcome you into the Middle School and we encourage you to communicate with the teachers or Ms. Bertrand whenever you have any questions or comments. We hope you have a challenging, growth-filled school year.

Contents:

Getting Started-----pgs. 1-5

- First Day
- Schedule
- Lockers
- Dress Code
- Class Time

Getting/Staying Organized-----pgs. 5-6

- Lockers
- Assignment Books
- Folders/Binders

Getting The Work Done-----pgs. 6-8

- Doing the work

Understanding Procedures-----pgs. 8-15

- Assignment Notebook
- Study Halls
- Grading Standards
- Disciplinary Action
- Cell Phones
- Same Expectations
- Before School
- Weapons, Violence, Bullying, Harassment
- Being Absent
- Library/Comp. Lab
- Academic Delinquency
- Staffings
- After School
- Appropriate Lang
- Additional Info.
- Passes
- Teacher Appts.
- Conferences
- Private Areas
- Cheating
- Noon Break

Getting Involved-----pgs. 15-16

- Academics
- Extra-Curriculars
- Religious Activities
- Awards
- Social Activities
- Communications

*****Getting Started*****

Remember, it may take some students two-four weeks (or MORE) to adjust to the changes of Middle School. Be patient with yourself and others. Ask for help if you need it.

****First Day****

The schedule for the first day is a little different due to the School Mass held at 10:30 a.m. You will go to your homeroom when the bell rings at 8:10 AM. Attendance will be taken and a few forms handed out. Teachers will tell you where to sit in church. Listen and follow directions carefully.

****Lockers****

The locker is for your books, learning supplies and coat. Do NOT decorate your locker, or bring too much stuff. Everything you bring must fit inside the locker *with the door closed*. Books must be placed in such a way as to protect them from damage. Pictures/posters inside the locker must be modest and appropriate. No decorations are allowed on the outside. Students will be fined if lockers are permanently damaged by decorations, tape, etc. Random locker checks may be conducted at any time. Students respect each other's property and privacy and never enter each other's lockers. Lockers will be cleaned once per quarter.

When can I arrange my locker?

The first day of school is a fine time. Arrive a little early to get your "things" situated in the locker.

May I store my supplies on the ledge above my locker?

No. The ledge should be free of all books, trash, papers, etc. Athletic gear should NOT be stored on top of the lockers.

Will I be able to take my backpack with me to each class?

No, you must leave your backpack in your locker, hanging on the hooks or sitting on the bottom of your locker. You may bring a small pencil bag with you to class, but it must fit inside a desk or on the under-chair rack.

****Schedule****

The schedule in the Middle School will have 8 periods every day. Periods will range from 30 minutes to 45 minutes. Schedules will be given to the students the first day of school.

What if I can't remember my schedule?

The classrooms have the schedule posted. Usually, you will have your schedule on a piece of paper with you at all times during the first several weeks. Copy and tape it into your locker and into your binder!

Will there be enough time for me to go back to my locker between classes?

Yes. The pass time between classes is three minutes. This amount of time seems to be sufficient.

What if I think I'm going to be late?

Get a pass from the class you just left or go to your next class and talk to the instructor. Politely request a few moments to do what you need to do. Do NOT make a habit of this.

What if I need to use the restroom between classes?

You will have time. Or, if you think you need more time than normal, go to the classroom instructor and ask permission to be late in order to use the restroom. Generally, there is enough time to use the restroom, get your books out of your locker and still get to your class on time, especially if you don't chat, and you do walk quickly.

Is the schedule the same on Mass days?

No. Mass time will change the schedule. The mass schedule is posted on the same sign as the regular schedule in the classrooms.

****Dress Code****

Respecting one's self is a value pertaining to modesty which basically reflects upon the fact that no matter what your body position, the length of shorts, skirts, dresses, etc. must be at or below fingertip length; the waistline must never show bare skin; and the straps of all shirts must be at least three fingers wide. Backless, see-through, tight, low-cut necklines, revealing, etc. types of clothes do not belong in school. Test your clothes before you wear them to school. Stand up straight, with your hands relaxed at your sides, and then raise one hand over your head. The length of the hemline should not rise above the fingertips of the hand that is relaxed at your side. Further, in all positions, there should never be any skin showing at the waistline, both front and back. Gentlemen are to wear pants that fit well enough to stay **above** their hips.

The following types of dress are UNACCEPTABLE AT ST.MARY'S:

1. Yoga pants, leggings, tight fitting/spandex pants, unless the hind-end is fully covered by a longer top/sweater.

2. Jeans that are frayed, torn, or shabby looking;
3. T- shirts with inappropriate designs or sayings, and muscle shirts;
4. Skirts, dresses and shorts that are too short or too tight (NO mini-skirts); these items must be finger tip length.
5. Straps on dresses and/or tank tops must be the width of 3 fingers or covered with a clothing article.
6. Sweatshirts that are worn and faded;
7. Cut off T-shirts or sweat shirts or pants;
8. Midriffs or inappropriate tank tops

DRESS UP DAYS: Every Thursday, on the day of the All School Liturgy, we have a dress up day. Sweat shirts/pants, blue jeans and athletic shorts are NOT PERMITTED on these dress up days. Neat, appropriate dress clothing should be worn on these days. Bermuda shorts are allowed to be worn on Mass days during designated months.

FOR GIRLS: Dresses, split skirts, dressy capris, dress pants and denim dresses or skirts are considered appropriate apparel. Also, yoga pants, leggings, tight fitting/spandex pants, if the hind-end is fully covered by a longer top/sweater. NO BLUE JEANS.

FOR BOYS: Dress pants, dress shirts, or sweater. Colored denim pants, NO BLUE JEANS, dress denim shirts with tie are also considered appropriate. Solid colored t-shirts and/or polo shirts are preferred.

SHORTS: During the months of April, May, September and October, shorts may be worn. Short shorts and spandex (volleyball) shorts are not appropriate. Shorts should be FINGER TIP IN LENGTH. If temperatures are warm during some of the other months of the year, the principal in conjunction with the Committee of Education may designate other "shorts' days."

MAKE-UP: Small amount of make-up may be worn.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: For Physical Education classes, students are required to wear tennis shoes. Grades 5-8 are required to have t-shirt, shorts and/or sweat pants to change into.

INAPPROPRIATE APPAREL: The principal will make the determination of inappropriate apparel. In such a case, the parent will be contacted.

****Class Time****

In most classes, teachers expect their students to be seated and ready to begin when the bell rings. You will be informed if there are exceptions to this rule. Each class will begin with attendance. All students are expected to be respectful and participate during prayer activities. We don't grade your faith, but we can evaluate your participation and cooperation.

What should I bring to each class?

A notebook, loose-leaf paper, textbook, assignment book for assignments, and a pencil/pen, are the general supplies of every class. Most teachers desire students to have a red pen for correcting and editing. Art supplies, like markers or colored pencils, are not required on a daily basis and may be kept in your locker until needed.

If I forget supplies will I be allowed to return to my locker?

Plan to bring everything you need to class at the beginning. A teacher may allow you to leave for something truly important, but not for routine supplies. It is distracting to have students roaming the halls and slamming lockers after classes begin.

Should I always ask permission to get out of my desk?

Generally, yes. There may be exceptions in certain classes, especially during different types of activities.

Am I expected to bring my own tissues if I have a cold?

You are to bring two boxes of tissues at the beginning of the school year. Teachers will then have a supply in their rooms. If you have a cold, it is a distraction to always be getting up to get tissues. It is responsible and polite to get tissues at the beginning of class. It is also responsible and polite to dispose of your own used tissues in a waste basket and NOT drop them on the floor or leave them inside or by a desk.

What if I don't get my homework finished by the due date?

In every case, the late assignment is due by class time the following day. If the assignment is completed and turned in one day after the due date 10% will be deducted from the assignment. An additional 10% will be taken off daily until the assignment is completed and turned in. Teachers will still require all work to be turned in even if it is late and for no credit. This is especially true if it is part of a larger assignment or project.

May I do extra credit to "make up" for late or missing assignments?

The general school policy for extra credit is that no more than 5% of the total points in a quarter may be earned with extra credit. If a teacher gives 500 points of work in a quarter, 25 extra credit points may be earned. Some teachers may require that all missing work be finished before extra credit can be earned, or there may be specific due dates or other requirements.

What do I do if I have a question on an assignment I'm working on at home and it is due the next day?

Call a classmate and ask them for help. If you talked to several other classmates and they are all having difficulties, see the teacher the next morning. Go directly to the teacher's room in the morning to get help. If the teacher is not in his/her room, leave a note explaining your difficulties. Be sure to mark the time and date, and sign your name. You might also go to Mrs. Smith to see if she could help you locate the teacher you are looking for.

What if I start to have a lot of problems with homework and keeping up in all my classes?

Make an appointment and talk to your teachers about it first. You will also need to talk to your parents about it.

*******Getting/Staying Organized*******

Organizational skills are key to success both in school and in life as an adult. Learning how to organize is an important skill to learn for yourself.

****Lockers****

Keeping your locker clean and neat is one of the most important ways to stay organized. Arrange your locker so that it is easy to find books and notebooks. Stack your books laying flat, so that they are not damaged (you will have to pay for book damage). It should be possible to hang your coat/purse/backpack in your locker. Don't jam your locker with junk. Lockers will be cleaned the last week of each quarter, and checked by a teacher. (See above Locker information under the "Getting Started" category).

****Assignment Books****

6th – 8th Grade students will have to purchase a school issued planner for \$4.00. Each class period, the student will enter the assignment, due date, quiz dates, project dates, etc. During the last few minutes of each class for the first quarter, the teachers will check the iPad/planner to make sure the assignments are recorded correctly. Students may be disciplined for not entering their assignments for each class. **The end of the day is NOT the time to enter all assignments.** It is a time to simply check over and review what needs to be taken home for homework. Students who do not record assignments, in each class, and/or do not bring their iPad/planner to each class, may be dismissed late.

****Folders/Binders/Notebooks****

If you have trouble getting organized, color code your textbooks, notebooks and folders. Have a different color for each subject. Keep all papers, handouts, assignments, etc. from each class separated from other papers in their individual subject folders (don't mix science papers with math papers). This is the **number one** cause of "lost" assignments. Clearly label all of your textbooks, notebooks, and folders with your name and the subject (Science, English, Math, etc.).

What should I do with all of my graded papers?

It is wise to use them to study with before a unit or chapter test, so keep them until the unit is complete. After that, take them home your parents deserve to see how you are doing in your classes on a daily basis, then you can recycle them. Don't keep all old papers at school in your locker – it makes a big mess.

Will I get to keep all of my graded tests, projects, etc.?

No. To prevent cheating teachers may collect and keep some of your graded work.

Do I have to have a three-ring binder for each class?

No, only if you want to. The accordion-filer, with 7 or more slots that expand, is a very efficient filing system. It is lightweight and has room for every subject. Plus, it is a lot less expensive than a three-ring binder and you don't have to three-punch anything. A two-pocket folder for each subject is the standard and easiest method of getting organized. Put graded work on one side, and assignments, handouts, and loose-leaf paper on the other side. Then color coordinate with the notebook for each class. You'll never take your blue science folder to math class if your math notebook and folder are both red!

*******Getting the Work Done*******

All the organization and information in the world won't do you any good unless you do the work of learning. Homework should be done at HOME! Just like muscles, your brain must be worked to increase its abilities. As Nike says, "Just do it"! No one can do your learning for you!

****Doing the work****

Follow these guidelines for all homework. Bold colored, easily readable ink pens (no markers/highlighters) for student correction activities. Your first name and last name initial should be on all student work. The heading for all assignments on

loose leaf should include: your first name and last initial, date, subject, and the assignment all in the right hand corner of the paper. Neatness, correct spelling, correct grammar mechanics, paragraph structure, etc. are all important in every class, especially on multiple-draft final work. The following is an example of what your homework heading should look like:

Name
Date
Subject
Assignment

Other daily work guidelines:

*Properly headed: first name, last name initial, date, subject and assignment.

*On loose leaf paper, with no fringes

*Right and left hand margins open (no writing in them)

*Scribble-free: If work is done in pen - correct errors using one straight horizontal line through errors. If work is done in pencil – erase mistakes

*Spelled correctly for all final drafts.

*Neat (free of doodles, scribbles, unreadable text)

*Colored pens for correcting/editing

Failure to follow these guidelines may result in loss of points, or being required to rewrite the assignment, with no credit provided unless rewritten.

Are there certain types of paper I should use?

Yes – Spiral bound notebooks only - wireless notebooks fall apart easily; wide ruled or college ruled notebook and loose leaf paper. Do not use the black paper, which is for artistic work. Use white or light colored, paper.

May I work on an assignment during class the day it is due?

No. All work is due at the start bell on the due date. It is considered late if not completed at that time. Instructors reserve the right to accept late work with reasonable explanations (funeral, serious illness in the family, etc.).

If I don't do my homework, will anything happen?

Yes. You will lose the ability to get an A or B on that assignment, and receive a lower grade. Teachers may require you to spend noon hours with them, or you may have after school detention for chronic missing assignments or unacceptable behavior. Some possible consequences are: athletic practices may have to be missed if you have missing assignments. Further, you might fail a number of classes if you don't do your homework, which means you would have to repeat the grade. Plus, you won't be able to participate in school sponsored extra curriculars if you fail a class. You won't learn as much, you will have wasted your parents' money and you will have to work harder later. It is foolish to not do homework

you can do. It is also an insult to God who gave you your intelligence to use to the best of your ability! If you really need help, ask your teachers to help you.

How do I turn in my work?

Some teachers have baskets for you to put your homework in as soon as you enter the classroom. If not, do not take it out of your folder until the teacher asks you to pass it in. This prevents it from being copied or misplaced.

*****Understanding Procedures*****

Procedures are standard ways of doing things. Knowing procedures will help you to fit in, meet expectations, and generally know what's going on or what's going to happen.

Assignment Notebook

At the beginning of each class, students will enter their assignment on their iPad. The teacher will then check to make sure the student enters the daily assignment. This will happen for at least the first month. If students are not cooperating with this procedure, they may be required to purchase an assignment book in which a parent signature would be required each day. This is an extremely important communication tool between teachers and parents. Parents should expect to examine their child's assignments on the iPad to see homework amounts, test dates, project assignments, etc.

Being Absent

Always have a parent call the school before 9:00 a.m. when you are absent or will be arriving late to school. It is very wise to attempt to avoid being absent whenever possible. If possible family trips should be planned around holiday breaks and days off. Sometimes, it is simply impossible to replace the learning that happens during a class period, especially when it involves group activities and discussion. If you have regularly scheduled absences, such as orthodontist or chiropractic appointments, ask your parents to NOT schedule them for the same slots each time, so that you are not always missing the same class.

If I'm sick, how do I get the assignments I missed?

Homework will not be gathered for first day of illness. If you are absent due to illness more than one day, a parent would have to make a request in order to get your assignments.

What if I miss class because of a school activity?

In every case, when it is a planned absence, you are to talk to every teacher of the classes you will miss and get the assignments and information you will miss ahead

of time. If you do not do this, teachers have the right to not give you points for the assignments you have missed, or to deny you the right to miss class for an extra curricular in the future. Always talk to your teachers ahead of time when you know you are going to be absent.

What if I have to leave class due to a band lesson?

It is the student's responsibility to turn in any daily assignment that is due and to ask the teacher what the new assignment will be and when it is due before leaving for the band lesson.

What if my family goes on a two week vacation?

Be sure to talk to all of your teachers at least a week or two before you are to leave. Ask for homework ahead, if it is possible, and get it done before you come back from your vacation. If extra time is needed, make arrangements with the teacher.

It is beneficial to the student if you would please consider the school calendar when making these plans.

****Passes****

If you are going to be leaving the building for an appointment, etc. or returning from an appointment, etc., you will need to stop in the office and you will be issued a pass to return to your classroom.

How am I expected to behave in the hallways?

There is to be NO talking in the halls during class time. You are to walk directly to your intended destination. You may NOT go to any other place unless it is marked on your planner, including the restroom or your locker.

May I go to the rest room or my locker, on my way to the library or any other place?

No. You may only go to the place designated on your pass. There is a limit to the number of students allowed in the rest room at the same time, and too many students in the hallways clanging their locker doors is very disruptive to classes.

****Media Center (Library)/Computer Lab****

Students use on a supervised basis only.

****Teacher Appointments****

Whenever you need to see a teacher, plan to make an appointment. Appointments can be made at the end of a class session. Teachers are usually available before and after school and during their prep periods. Teachers have regular commitments (meetings, etc.) during these times, so it is important to make an appointment to ensure the teacher is available.

If I need to see a teacher, what is the proper procedure?

Ask the teacher at the end of the class period if she/he could see you at a specific time/day. Write down the time/day the teacher tells you, and be sure to keep your appointment.

What should I do if the teacher isn't there when she/he said they would be?

Stay for about five minutes. Then leave a note that you were there and put the time and date on it. Return ten minutes later, if possible.

What if my parents want to talk to a teacher?

Have your parents call the school and leave a message for the teacher, bring a note to the teacher from your parents asking the teacher to call and arrange a meeting time, or send an email to the teacher. Parents should **not** just “show up” and expect to be able to meet with a teacher during the school day (7:45-3:45) without a prior appointment.

****Grading Standards****

Although each teacher may choose their own grading standards and practices, at the end of the quarter, those grades are converted to the school standard, which is as follows:

A = 100 - 96	B- = 86, 85	D+ = 75, 74
A- = 95, 94, 93	C+ = 84, 83, 82	D = 73, 72, 71
B+ = 92, 91, 90	C = 81, 80, 79	D- = 70, 69
B = 89, 88, 87	C- = 78, 77, 76	F = 68 and below

Is it hard to get an “A”?

Students should remember that an “A” represents the most outstanding, advanced, masterful representation of learning. Students who work hard can get “A”s.

****Academic Delinquency Notification****

If a student is failing at the middle of the quarter, teachers will send home a midterm report. Teachers will send midterm reports home to everyone. The school keeps a copy of every failing midterm report sent home. Teachers require all reports to be signed and returned. Parents are then expected to call or send a note if they desire further progress updates.

****Conferences****

Conferences are held at the end of first and the middle of the second quarter, in November and February. Parents will pick up report cards and visit with teachers. If a student is having difficulty in some or all of his/her classes, a “staffing” may

be requested by the school or by the parent. (See description of “staffing” below.) During regular conferences, parents have about three minutes to discuss each of their students with each teacher. This is not a time to discuss other concerns (athletics, extra curriculars, general school policies, etc.)

****Staffing****

A staffing may be called by a parent, the principal or teacher. The purpose of the staffing is to have open communication between student, parents, teachers and support staff to ensure the best possible plan of action for helping the student. A staffing may be called for academic, social, emotional, or behavioral reasons. Plans of action may include anything from notifying the parents weekly of student academic progress to developing a modified academic plan based upon testing-identified areas of need.

****Teacher Privacy Areas****

There are certain areas in the school building that are for staff members only. Students should respect the privacy of those areas. Students should never sit at a teacher’s desk or enter an area of the classroom normally reserved for the teacher. Office spaces are also included in this restriction.

May I enter the faculty lounge?

No. Knock and wait for someone to come to the door. If that teacher/staff member gives you permission to enter, then you may. Teachers request that students respect a teacher’s right to eat lunch.

May I look at the papers/work which are on my teachers’, principal’s or secretary’s desks?

No. No matter whether the teacher/adult is present or not, you are not to look at what is on their desks.

May I enter a classroom when no teacher is present, for example, during noon hour or before/after school?

Yes, but only to leave a note, or if you have specific permission to be in a certain classroom at a specific time. For example, if you have an appointment and are waiting for the teacher to arrive, you may stay a few minutes. In some cases, a teacher may simply have gone to do an errand between classes and will return in a few moments. If you are to be in the classroom for class, then simply take your seat and wait for the teacher to return.

What if a teacher does not come to class?

If a teacher is missing from your class for more than five minutes, the student who is seated closest to the door should go directly to the office and inform the

secretary that the teacher is not present in class. The teacher may be ill or in a meeting, and someone will be sent to supervise the class.

****Before School/Noon Break****

This is the time to use the restroom and water fountain. Once students have finished eating and disposed of their trays/trash, they will return to school with their teacher. The noon duty teacher must be notified if a student is to leave noon hour for any reason. There are specific rules related to study time that will be reviewed at the beginning of school.

****Disciplinary Action****

When a student freely and knowingly chooses to violate stated expectations of behavior, disciplinary action will result. Teachers may choose a range of consequences, from “time outs”, to after school detention or even, possibly, in-school suspension, depending upon the seriousness of the violation.

What do I do if a teacher “kicks” me out of class?

Go directly to the office. You will not be allowed to return to your class until the end of the period unless instructed differently from the classroom teacher. If the cause is serious, you may receive in-school suspension for the rest of the day.

Must I always obey the teachers?

Yes, and this includes all other school personnel, from janitors, to the secretary and aides, to the cooks. You are expected to be obedient and respectful of all the adults in the school or at school activities. If you have a concern about the appropriateness of something an adult asks you to do, speak with the principal about your concerns.

****Cell Phones****

Cell phones are not allowed during the school day (8:15-3:00 PM). A cell phone that is brought to school by a student must be turned off and left in their locker. If a cell phone is on school/church grounds during school hours and is seen by any staff of St. Mary’s Parish, the student will receive a verbal warning. A second offense will result in the device being turned over to the Principal for **three days**. At the beginning of day 4, the student may retrieve his/her device. If the device is taken from a student for a second time, it will be given to the Principal for a **three week** period. At the end of the three weeks, the device will be released to the student’s parent.

What if someone commits a crime?

Crimes would include stealing, serious vandalism, harassment, trespassing (staff property or privacy areas), assault (physical violence), threats, etc. If the crimes

are serious, charges may be filed with the local law enforcement officers. Suspension, expulsion, detention and fines are all possible consequences, along with the punishments assigned by the court system.

****After School****

If you are in an extra curricular activity, go to your designated area so that you are supervised. If you need extra academic help, you will need to make an appointment with the teacher. If you don't have an appointment, you may not be able to see the teacher. If you have no reason to be at school, go home! All students must have an adult supervisor responsible for them in order to remain in the building. **You may NOT use athletic equipment or facilities unsupervised.** Also, the library and computer lab may NOT be used without adult supervision.

Are there other ways to share my worries, fears, concerns?

Yes. You may go to your teacher and discuss your concerns or fears. You may also make an appointment to discuss them with school counselor.

****Do all teachers have the same expectations?***

No! This would not be fair. Different teachers have different expectations due to variations in content, teaching style, ability level of students, etc. This is probably one of the most difficult changes to make in junior high – having several different teachers, each with a unique style and separate classroom rules. Get to know what each teacher wants from the students.

****Cheating****

Cheating consists of portraying yourself as having learned information or a skill that you have not learned. Copying of any kind is always cheating. Cheating is a violation of the seventh and eighth commandments, as well as the first and fourth commandments. As such, the consequences will be serious. Teachers will do everything in their power to prevent and respond to cheating so that it is discouraged. Students who cheat should expect to get zero credit. Further, alternate test times/formats may be required. Multiple cheating offenses will have even greater consequences.

****Appropriate Language****

This is a Christian educational institution and as such, certain types of language are inappropriate as well as sinful. Some words are simply crude or rude. Others may be seriously sinful. Using the holy name of Jesus or God in vain is always a serious violation of our Christian standards. Using any type of language to threaten, intimidate or insult is also seriously wrong. Our language should be pure and gentle, as well as completely honest. Expect detention or suspension for violations.

****Weapons, Violence, Bullying, Harassment****

St. Mary's is a drug (illegal)-free, weapons-free, harassment-free institution. Any violation of these standards is considered very serious and may result in suspension or expulsion, as well as possible criminal charges. Vandalism, risqué locker photos, and inappropriate graffiti are also forms of harassment. Bullying and intimidation, as well as verbal, emotional or sexual harassment have no place in a Christian establishment. Threats of violence will be treated as serious and may require police action. Name-calling, mocking or insulting a person repeatedly is bullying. Report cases of violations to Ms. Bertrand, as well as telling your parents. Do not allow yourself to be bullied or harassed. Everyone deserves the right to learn in an environment free of fear. It is the student that is being bullied, harassed, etc. responsibility to make a verbal report to his/her classroom teacher.

****Additional Information****

No candy/snacks are to be eaten between/during classes. On Mass day, NO food, candy, gum, pop, juice, etc. is to be eaten for an hour before receiving Holy Communion.

*******Getting Involved*******

There are numerous opportunities for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders to become involved in the academic, religious, social, musical, and athletic activities the school offers. Considerations should include proper priorities and time management skills. Some students can handle a multitude of activities, and some can not.

****Academics****

Band lessons provide individual music instruction. Math Counts, Math League and Math Masters are all math competition and are a part of the advanced math curriculum. Students should expect that homework is a part of their school activities. At least 60-75 minutes of homework per night will be normal.

****Religious Activities****

Outside of classroom prayer, middle school teachers often plan masses and request volunteers to assist with the various tasks of mass planning and ministry. During Lent, students go to Stations of the Cross as a class. Praise Team Choir is required for sixth, seventh and eighth graders. Their ministry is to lead the music at school masses. Students who desire to play piano or use a musical instrument are encouraged to attend rehearsals and join in.

****Social Activities****

Students are encouraged to cultivate good friendships without forming cliques. Teachers observe students for behaviors that are antisocial (bullying, isolation, etc.) and attempt to intervene when possible.

****Extra Curriculars****

The following is a list of most of the extracurricular activities available to seventh and eighth graders. The primary goal of school is academic learning. However, important social, intellectual, physical and emotional learning are accomplished through extra curricular activities. There are participation fees for most of these activities:

Football	Cross Country	Musical (by audition)
Track	Basketball	Volleyball
Golf	Math Counts	Dance Team
Math Masters	Baseball	Wrestling
Math League	Softball	Handbell Choir

Also the school encourages other positive social and physical activities such as 4-H, Girl Scouts/Boy Scouts, summer athletic leagues, individual music lessons, etc.

****Awards****

Students are recognized, by their teachers, through a Student-of-the-Month Award. Also further awards and/or recognition may be given to students who are outstanding citizens, participating appropriately and encouraging fellow students in all areas of school activities, as well as in academic classrooms.

****Communications****

Use the standard phone number 365-3693 to reach the personnel directory. Using the school website will allow you to send an e-mail to any teacher. If you would like to have a teacher contact you via e-mail, be sure to give them your e-mail address. Letters and phone calls are also still appropriate.

Revised 9/20