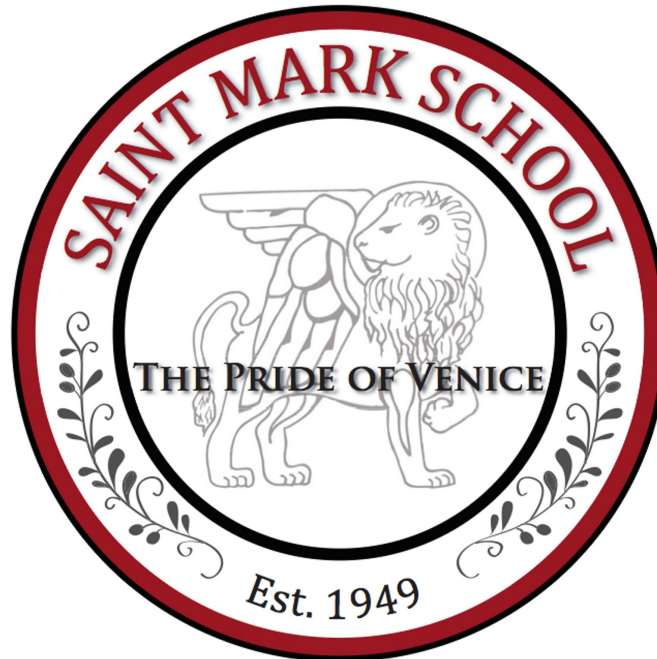


**SAINT MARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
**PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK**  
**2018-2019**



**THE PRIDE OF VENICE SINCE 1949**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

History of Saint Mark School.....

Saint Mark School.....

Philosophy/Vision/Mission Statement.....

Student Learning Expectations.....

About Our School.....

Our Program.....

Additional Programs at  
SMS.....

Safeguard the Children.....

Archdiocesan Policy Statement: Zero Tolerance.....

Safe Environment Training for Children and Youth.....

Guidelines for Adults Interacting with Minors.....

Guidelines for Junior High and High School Youth Working with  
Children.....

    Code of Conduct.....

Admission Standards and Requirements.....

Admission Interview and Evaluation.....

Inclusion Procedures.....

General School Information.....

    School Hours.....

How We Measure Success.....

Conferences and Progress Reports.....

Homework.....

Field Trips.....

Service Learning Program.....

School Lunch Program.....

Special Treats.....

Recess and Lunch Supervision.....

Medical.....

Medical Report.....

Immunization Requirements.....

Fever.....

Medication.....

School Calendar.....

Attendance.....

Morning Arrival and Drop-Off Procedures.....

Dismissal.....

Tardiness and Absences.....

Student Release During School Hours.....

Vacations.....

Planned Absences.....

Additional Procedures.....

    Bicycles.....

    Drop Off/Carline/Parking Procedures.....

    Parking.....

    Leaving the Schoolyard.....

    After School Hours Pick-Up.....

    Lost and Found.....

    Electronics Policy.....

    Care of Personal Property.....

    Work Permits.....

    Student Insurance.....

    PAC Reimbursements.....

Expectations and Standards.....

    Parent/Guardian Responsibilities.....

    Recommended Transfer of a Child.....

    Parent Participation.....

    Parent-Teacher Communication.....

    Weekly Message from the  
    Principal/Website.....

    Student Responsibilities.....

Dress Code.....	.....
Hair, Nails, and Jewelry.....	.....
Outerwear and Change of Clothing.....	.....
\$1 Theme Days and Free Dress Days.....	.....
Disciplinary Policy.....	.....
Conflict Resolution.....	.....
Correcting Student Behavior.....	.....
Grievance and Arbitration Procedures.....	.....
Archdiocesan Code of Christian Conduct.....	.....
Discipline.....	.....
Conditions of Suspension.....	.....
Expulsion.....	.....
Procedure for Expulsion.....	.....
Cases Involving Grave	
Offenses.....	.....
Time of	
Expulsion.....	.....
Reporting of	
Expulsions.....	.....
Right to Make	
Exceptions.....	.....
Harassment, Bullying, and Hazing	
Policy.....	.....
Student Threats.....	.....
School Searches.....	.....
Parent/Student Compliant Review	
Process.....	.....
School Level.....	.....
Personal Items and	
Electronics.....	.....
Archdiocesan Electronic Communications	
Policy.....	.....
SMS Advisory	
Board.....	.....
SMS Board	
Meetings.....	.....
SMS Parent Action	
Committee.....	.....
Library	
Committee.....	.....
Opportunities to	
Serve.....	.....
Donations and	
Gifts.....	.....
Archdiocesan Guidelines for School Boards and Parent	
Organizations.....	.....
Parent	
Organizations.....	.....
Consultative School	
Boards.....	.....
Financial.....	.....
Tuition and	
Fees.....	.....
Facts.....	.....
Tuition.....	.....
...	
Assistance.....	.....
Tuition.....	.....
...	
Refunds.....	.....
Archdiocesan Privacy and Access to Records and Standards.....	.....
Pupil	
Records.....	.....
Directory	

Information.....

Verbal/Written Confidences.....

Transfer of Records.....

Student Transfers and  
Graduation.....

Damaged or Loaned  
Property.....

Acknowledgements.....

....

Student and Parent Pledge.....

School/Principal’s Right to Amend this  
Handbook.....

Appendices.....

Contract for Appropriate Internet Use by  
Minors.....

SMS Dress Code and Uniform  
Code.....

Uniform Code.....

Emergency Preparedness.....

SMS Earthquake/Disaster Procedures.....

Harassment.....

# THE HISTORY OF SAINT MARK SCHOOL

As a part of the Community of Saint Mark in Venice, California, Saint Mark Elementary School first opened its doors to students on September 12, 1949. The original school was comprised of three bungalows, purchased from Saint Augustine Parish, and was located on Victoria Avenue. The initial 150 students were served by the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (SNJM). More classroom bungalows were added each year to accommodate the growing student body. In 1952, the Community of Saint Mark broke ground to begin the construction of a permanent school site at 912 Coeur d'Alene Avenue. The current facility opened in October of 1953 with a total enrollment of 658 students in eleven classrooms!

Saint Mark School reached its peak enrollment of 923 students in 1957 and became a sixteen-classroom school the following year (grades 1-8). Over the course of decades the school's enrollment decreased and the classrooms shifted in their use allowing for specialist classrooms and space for other resources. The Archdiocese of Los Angeles mandated that Catholic elementary schools reduce the classes per grade as the number of religious, available to serve in the schools, declined. Almost all Catholic schools made this shift, including St. Mark School. The current enrollment is approximately 270 students.

Kindergarten opened in September, 1981 with 25 students. Other rooms were used to create the library, art room, science lab, school and religious education offices and faculty and supply rooms. In 2012, a Transitional Kindergarten program was implemented in a room that had formerly been the upper grade computer lab. Student bathrooms were remodeled in 2008. A new faculty bathroom was installed in 2011.

In September, 1988, the Sisters of the Holy Names initiated the lay administration of the school. The last teaching Sister of the Holy Names retired from Saint Mark Elementary School in June, 1992. Like other Catholic schools across the country, St. Mark has been largely run and staffed by lay educators who are devoted to service in Catholic schools.

In 1995, a covered eating area was constructed on the south side of the building. A fenced primary play yard with a grassy play area was also added behind the church and adjacent to the Garfield parking lot. More recently, a play area was added near the TK and K classrooms. This play area, known as "Pardee Park" and named for the Pardee family who sponsored the play area, was opened on February 14, 2011. It initially included a multi-activity gym structure with soft astro-turf. In 2015 the astroturf and the asphalt below it were removed and replaced with a deep bed of engineered wood chips and surrounded by decomposed granite. A large sand box was added and many trees were planted near the play area.

Recent refurbishments include painting the entire interior of the school, replacing the damaged skylight in the main hall, addition of internet access points, and a dedicated internet access line for the school. The lunch tables have been restored as well as much of the furniture in the school. A new sprinkler system and replanting in the front of the school building were completed in the summer of 2014.

School parents undertook a project to complete a mural on the Lincoln side of the parish hall and this installation was completed in August, 2014. The mural depicts several features of the school including the *Peacebuilder* Program.

Further efforts to improve the school plant and enhance the learning environment were undertaken in the summer of 2015. More than 10,000 square feet of asphalt were removed on three sides of the school building. Permeable pavers, concrete pads for the lunch tables, and decomposed granite were installed. A comprehensive water reclamation system was added to capture and use all of the water that runs off the roof in a rain storm. This system includes water cisterns, permeable material and a large infiltration system. Dozens of drought tolerant trees and shrubs were planted, new hand ball courts were added as well as large boulders

providing additional seating areas for students. A school garden program was begun to enhance the student's hands on experience with agriculture and to provide other science applications. The outdoor area was further enhanced with a new overhang structure over the lunch tables.

During the summer of 2016 the school's entire electrical system was upgraded and enhanced. Additional plugs, and retrofitted light fixtures to LED have further enhanced all of the spaces in the building. The installation of new displays in all learning spaces mounted and wired to the walls further support the technology interface for all faculty and students. Modern classroom furniture and new cabinets were installed in middle school classrooms as well as new equipment and educational materials across grades.

During the spring, 2017, air-conditioning/heating units were installed.

Saint Mark Elementary School's growth in the new millennium has been focused on the expansion of curriculum and activities that support a commitment to academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment, and to "*care for self, others; and the environment*". The one-to-one device program being implemented in grades 5-8 during the 2016-2017 school year includes additional and new software and educational applications to enhance the educational experience of students.

Recent investments in technology - both fiber optic and wireless infrastructure, as well as devices for faculty and students, have enhanced the learning experience of all. Physical plant improvements and enhancements have further supported the educational experience of all school members.

## **SAINT MARK SCHOOL**

Saint Mark Elementary School is a non-profit, non-discriminatory school in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, providing Catholic education according to the standards established by the Archdiocese and certified by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA).

The school, mindful of its mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, admits students regardless of race, color, national and/or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, sex, national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies and practices, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs, although certain athletic leagues and other programs may limit participation.

While the school does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services may not always be available to them. Decisions concerning the admission and continued enrollment of a student in the school are based upon the student's emotional, academic and physical abilities and the resources available to the school in meeting the student's needs. Title 1 funding was implemented in the 2012-2013 school year and qualifying students are receiving services. St. Mark School may not qualify for Title 1 funding in the future as it is a program that is reviewed annually.

The purpose of this handbook is to set forth the mission, goals and objectives of Saint Mark School, and to provide an overview of policies, procedures and reference information to aid in assuring open and positive relationships among students, teachers and parents.

Sections of this handbook represent specific Archdiocese of Los Angeles verbiage, and form the basis for local policy and procedures.

Individual needs not addressed in this handbook should be discussed with the principal.

St. Mark School operates according to the policies set forth in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Administrative Handbook. Any information in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Administrative Handbook that has been updated since the 2017-2018 School Parent/Student Handbook was published will supersede what is spelled out in the 2017-2018 School Parent/Student Handbook.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles Administrative Handbook can be found at [www.la-archdiocese.org](http://www.la-archdiocese.org) under publications.

### **Right to Amend**

The principal and/or pastor reserves the right to amend this handbook at any time. Parents will be notified via email if changes are made and will be encouraged to view changes to the Handbook posted on the school's website.

### **PHILOSOPHY**

We, the community of Saint Mark School, guided by our Catholic faith, promote the growth and education of the whole child - spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical. We strive to help each student realize their own unique gifts and talents and to develop a personal relationship with God through the study of our Catholic faith and participation in the Sacraments and service to the community.

### **VISION**

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children and that their partnership with St. Mark School indicates their commitment to the values of Catholic education in the twenty-first century. By promoting a Christ-centered environment, teachers, students, and the larger community work cooperatively and creatively, engendering respect for the individual and the group. We are committed to provide an atmosphere in which children develop a love of learning and see themselves as agents of change in the world.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Our mission is to promote respect for self, others and the environment in a safe and supportive Catholic learning community that fosters discovery and the development of each student's unique spiritual, emotional, physical and intellectual potential.

\* \* \*

Because Saint Mark School is a Christ-centered school, we are committed to hiring teachers, assistants and staff members who practice their Catholic or other Christian faith. An expression of Catholic faith and spirituality permeates throughout the school.

## STUDENT LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Our educational goal at Saint Mark School is to facilitate the success and personal growth of each student in such a way that he/she will be recognized by the following traits, which define our Saint Mark School Learning Expectations.



### A ST. MARK STUDENT IS:

- ❖ **A knowledgeable and practicing Catholic or Christian** who:
  - Makes life choices based on Christian morals and values
  - Undertakes faith formation with interest and purpose
  - Contributes actively to school, parish and community
- ❖ **An active and confident learner** who:
  - Possesses a strong foundation in all major subjects
  - Communicates effectively, thinks critically and solves problems creatively
  - Participates in and appreciates music, athletics, and the arts
  - Embraces and applies technology responsibly and ethically
  - Demonstrates good citizenship, sportsmanship and cooperation in both work and play
- ❖ **A responsible and engaged community member** who:
  - Exhibits leadership qualities
  - Takes initiative and participates through service and participation
  - Appreciates his/her individual heritage and that of others
  - Understands history's impact on the current world



## ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

Saint Mark School (SMS) is a part of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Catholic Elementary School system, fully licensed by the State of California, and accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), and the Western Catholic Education Association (WCEA). The school's last WASC accreditation visit occurred in February of 2016 and the school was given the highest rating possible - "A Full 6 Year Accreditation."

## OUR PROGRAM

Students in Transitional Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> Grade, are guided in Faith and Formation, Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Spanish language and Physical Education. Technology is applied throughout the curriculum and supported by the Director of Educational Technology. In the 2013-2014 school year portable computer labs were added. There is a MacBook Air cart, and an iPad cart, in addition to other devices in classrooms. All teachers, faculty, and students have Gmail accounts and use the full suite of Google Applications for Education. In the 2016-2017 school year a one-to-one device iPad program was implemented in grades 5-8.

St. Mark School strives to help all students develop skills in written, spoken and digital communication; reading comprehension; listening, speaking, observing, discovering; memorization; logical reasoning; critical thinking; active learning; research and information gathering in order to thrive in a global community.

St. Mark School focuses on the development of the Christian conscience and respect among all. Honesty, integrity, self-discipline, loyalty, cooperation, community spirit, global citizenship and an appreciation of cultural diversity, patriotism, social justice, service and stewardship are all cultivated and valued.

The school endeavors to help students respect their bodies and their lives as gifts from God through educational experiences that emphasize the development of positive and safe health habits, physical fitness and sportsmanship, understanding of physical and biological functions and the sanctity of life. 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students participate in a human development program/curriculum and students across grades receive instruction in regards to personal safety and "safe" touching both to educate and to protect students.

Students are challenged to become responsible digital citizens and are encouraged to be thoughtful about their use of technology at school and beyond.

*Respect for self, others, and the environment* includes helping students develop a positive self-image that assures a healthy sense of self-esteem and self-worth; the courage to make mistakes and the dedication to persevere in the process of developing personal strengths and talents; the ability to know and form healthy relationships; the ability to discern right from wrong, and the confidence to make choices that enhance dignity. "Peace Builders" program was implemented in the winter of 2013 and continues presently.

"Responsive Classroom," a classroom management and classroom culture program was implemented during the 2016-2017 school year, formally. This program supports the school's philosophy of educating students in their capacity to feel empathy, develop skills as self advocates and advocates for others while gaining an appreciation for their role as a member of the school and classroom community.

## ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AT SMS

- ❖ **Sacramental Preparation:** Our 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Catholic students and their families participate in a two year preparation program for the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist. Students prepare in the classroom, as a part of their Faith and Formation curriculum; parents attend special Saturday sessions scheduled throughout the school year. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> grade Catholic students celebrate these sacraments for the first time in Spring. Occasionally, students from other grades are involved in this program.
- ❖ **Worship and “Church” Families:** Students from each grade (TK-8) form *worship families* (also known as “Church Families”) and attend weekly Mass together, providing a sense of connection across grade levels. Students practice and model grace and courtesy, care for one another, and build self confidence and esteem in their multi-age relationships.
- ❖ **Choir:** Members of our student church choir practice weekly after school to prepare and support the liturgical music for our Saint Mark 9:00 a.m. Sunday Mass and our Friday school Mass.
- ❖ **Lion Liders:** A performance choir for students in grades 4-8 meets weekly and performs regularly.
- ❖ **Altar Servers:** Students in grades 4-8 may train to become altar servers at Friday and Sunday liturgies.
- ❖ **Student Council:** Student Council representatives are elected at the end of the prior school year. Student Council plans and leads school assemblies daily, sponsors “Jeans Day” fundraising efforts each month to benefit special groups/needs such as St. Jude’s or relief funds for victims of natural disasters. Leading morning assembly is one of the main responsibilities of a “StuCo” member as well as setting up and taking down the yard each day. Student Council also supports admission outreach endeavors and represents the school as needed.
- ❖ **Musical Productions:** Christmas and spring musical programs, a spring instrumental music recital and the musical theatre production provide many opportunities for school-wide musical performances.
- ❖ **Homework Club:** Our after-school program provides an opportunity for students to exercise, read and complete homework or study. *Homework Club* hours are from 3:00 – 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 12:30 – 5:30 p.m. on Friday. Monthly sign-up forms are available through the office and the school’s website.
- ❖ **After –School Fine Arts:** A spring musical theatre production, studio arts and crafts, orchestra, private music lessons and other activities may be made available throughout the school year. Please watch for notices of planned activities.
- ❖ **Orchestra/instrumental music classes -**
- ❖ **After-School Sports:** SMS CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) sports program provides opportunities to develop skills in sports and sportsmanship, beginning with seasonal “C” level sports (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades); “B” level sports (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades) and “A” level sports (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades) for boys and girls. fall sports include girls’ volleyball, co-ed cross country and boys’ flag football; winter sports include boys’ and girls’ basketball; spring sports include boys’ and girls’ futsal (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades) boys’ volleyball (offered when there is enough interest) and boys’/girls’ track. Watch for sports sign-up opportunities through our school newsletter or our website! On campus tennis, golf, and chess, are available and an off campus gymnastics program is also offered.

❖ **After-School Activities/Classes:**

- ❖ Athletic teams - three seasons of play
- ❖ Lion Lieders
- ❖ Singer/Songwriters
- ❖ Liturgical Choir
- ❖ Studio art classes
- ❖ Spanish language Immersion Classes

Participation in afterschool programs and activities at SMS requires that students maintain appropriate academic standards. Homework Club is excluded from this. **Students whose academic achievement is compromised by incomplete work or who are not making steady progress may not be allowed to participate in after school activities, including athletic teams, and electives. Students must maintain a C average or better in all of their classes in order to participate in after school activities and electives.**

## SAFEGUARD THE CHILDREN

Our commitment to protect the children of Saint Mark School is manifest in every aspect of our work with the students. Teachers, administrators, staff and volunteers are screened and trained to remain vigilant in assuring that every child is safe in every school setting. Our doors are locked during school hours; visitors must sign in and are accompanied when there is a need to be in the school; children are never left alone or unattended; safety training and awareness are incorporated into every aspect of our curriculum, empowering the children to say “no” to uncomfortable circumstances, to identify unsafe behaviors, and to feel secure in expressing their feelings.

Please review the following Archdiocesan **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY** and **SAFE ENVIRONMENT** guidelines which are fully implemented by Saint Mark School.

The handbook Appendix entitled *Protecting God’s Children* provides a further guide for parents.

### ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES “ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY”

Under the “Zero Tolerance Policy” of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, any person guilty of sexual misconduct with a **minor under the age of 18:**

- ❖ **May not have any paid or volunteer assignment in any “ministry” in the Archdiocese, and**
- ❖ **May not volunteer in any "non-ministerial" activity or event where he/she has any possibility of more than incidental contact or supervisory or disciplinary power over minors.**

Any parent or guardian who is a registered sex offender must contact the principal to discuss the requirements in order to assure compliance with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Zero Tolerance Policy.

As members of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles community, we want to assure that we are in compliance with both Megan's Law and our “Zero Tolerance Policy.”

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Each school and religious education program must establish an ongoing safe environment training program for the children at its site. Home-based materials must be provided to all parents to help them understand and support their children's education regarding child sexual abuse. The approved programs include **Good-Touch/Bad-Touch®** and **VIRTUS® Teaching Touching Safety** (*Mandated September 1, 2006*).

**Good-Touch/Bad-Touch®** is being implemented in Grades TK-9 in Catholic elementary schools throughout the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The program is designed to be age-appropriate, to support children in understanding occasions of abuse, and to give them confidence in reporting and asserting themselves in situations where they feel unsafe.

**VIRTUS® Teaching Touching Safety** is a K-12 program being implemented in religious education programs and Catholic schools. This program is a vehicle through which parents, teachers, catechists and youth ministers give children and young people the tools they need to protect themselves from those who might harm them.

The Archdiocesan Office of Safeguard the Children will work with principals at the schools and Directors of Religious Education in the parishes to establish these programs. During the 2007-2008 year, training is expected to reach most of the children in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. Questions concerning this program can be forwarded to Sister Mary Elizabeth Galt, B.V.M., Chancellor, Coordinator of Children's Programs at (213) 637-7460

## **GUIDELINES FOR ADULTS INTERACTING WITH MINORS AT PARISH OR PARISH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS**

Adults acting in a staff, faculty, ministerial or other paid or volunteer position in the Archdiocese are role models who are called to treat each minor with respect and care. Staff members, faculty or volunteers serving either in a paid or volunteer position need to maintain professional relationships with minors whether on or off parish or parish school locations. **Please review the following guidelines and sign the "Acknowledgment of Receipt" for the file at the parish or parish school where you work or volunteer.**

- ❖ Staff members/faculty/volunteers will ensure that minors are properly supervised at all times, thus providing them a safe environment. Minors must be viewed as "restricted individuals" because they are not adults and are not independent.
- ❖ If staff members/faculty/volunteers who are supervising minors observe a situation where civil law, parish and/or school rules are being violated, they must take appropriate action immediately.
- ❖ Staff members/faculty/volunteers should always be aware they have considerable personal power because of their ministerial positions. Therefore, they will maintain respectful ministerial relationships, avoiding manipulation and other abuses of power.
- ❖ Staff members/faculty/volunteers must avoid assuming the role of a "father or mother figure" which may create an excessive emotional attachment for all parties.
- ❖ Attraction between adults and minors is possible, and care and caution should be taken in all interactions. The parish/school administration should be informed immediately if such an attraction exists. Dating or sexual relationships between a staff member/faculty/volunteer and a minor are inappropriate and unethical. Dating or sexual relationships between a staff member/faculty/volunteer and a minor are unlawful.
- ❖ Communications with minors (e.g., notes, email and internet exchanges, telephone calls) must be for professional reasons only.
- ❖ Discussions of a sexual nature must always take place in an appropriate educational context. Sexual jokes, slang or innuendo are inappropriate when interacting with minors.
- ❖ Staff members/faculty/volunteers will respect confidential information concerning minors or confidential information of a personal nature shared by a minor. However, if a minor shares confidential information that could pose a threat to the minor or to others, the staff member/faculty/volunteer has an obligation to notify the proper authorities.
- ❖ When staff members/faculty/volunteers are supervising minors or young adults at parish/parish school-sponsored activities, they may not be under the influence of alcohol, may not consume alcohol in the presence of persons under age 21, nor offer alcohol to them.
- ❖ When a staff member/faculty/volunteer is alone in a room with a minor, the door must be open or there must be clear visibility through windows.
- ❖ Staff members/faculty/volunteers are to engage in games or sports activities with minors only in the presence of other adults, or in a place openly accessible/visible to others.
- ❖ Staff members/faculty/volunteers planning parish/parish school events in their homes with minors must have the permission of the parish/school administration. In addition, staff members/faculty/volunteers

may not have any minor in their homes without the knowledge of the minor's parent or guardian.

- ❖ Staff members/faculty/volunteers may not drive minors unless it is to or from a parish/parish school-sponsored activity and may never drive alone with a minor. Driving minors requires parental permission slips that indicate the transportation is by personal vehicle. The parish/parish school administration must approve any use of personal vehicles. Trips involving minors must have a sufficient number of adult chaperones and minors to preclude the appearance of inappropriate personal involvement with minors.
- ❖ Parent/guardian written permission is required for the publication of a picture of a minor.
- ❖ Adults are permitted to interact alone with minor(s) only after complying with Archdiocesan policies regarding fingerprinting and safe environment training. They may work with minors only as part of a team if they have not completed these requirements.

### **BOUNDARY GUIDELINES FOR JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH WORKING OR VOLUNTEERING WITH CHILDREN OR YOUTH**

To ensure the safety of the children in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, all youth volunteers, both junior high and high school students, including students who are already 18, who work or volunteer with children/youth in school or parish settings must receive training on these boundary guidelines before undertaking their ministry in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and must sign this Code of Conduct form to verify that they understand their obligations.

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENT WORKERS/VOLUNTEERS

I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct. I understand that any action inconsistent with or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal from my volunteer or work assignment.

### **As a Student Volunteer I will:**

- Respect the adults and supervisors with whom I interact.
- Safeguard at all times children or other youth entrusted to my care.
- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy and dignity.
- Take care to be positive, supportive and caring in my speaking, writing and actions with the children/youth.
- Avoid situations where I am alone with a child/youth.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism or comparison when working with children/youth.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children/youth. Report suspected abuse to my supervisor, or if it involves my supervisor, report it to the principal or pastor at the location.
- Be aware that young people can easily become infatuated with a youth leader or an adult. If I sense that this is happening. I will not encourage it. I will make my administrator aware of it so that the supervisor can resolve the matter, including reassigning me to other activities.
- Maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries with the children/youth.
- Dress appropriately and not wear any clothing with offensive messages or pictures.

### **As a Student Volunteer I will not:**

- Endorse, during my ministry, any view contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Commit an illegal or immoral act.
- Smoke or use tobacco products.
- Use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at anytime while at work or volunteering.
- Verbally threaten or physically abuse anyone.
- Use profanity in the presence of children/youth.
- Use discipline that frightens or humiliates a child/youth.
- Touch a child/youth in a sexual, overly affectionate or other inappropriate manner.
- Sexually harass, request sexual favors from, or make sexually explicit statements to anyone.
- Place myself in a situation where my interaction with a child/youth cannot be witnessed.
- Participate in private visits, parties or other activities with the children/youth unless approved by my supervisor.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to children/youth in my care without approval from my supervisor.



- Tolerate inappropriate or bullying behavior by a child/youth towards another child/youth.
- Fraternize with minors over the internet or through other forms of communication.

We, the undersigned, have read and understand the Archdiocese of Los Angeles *Boundary Guidelines for Junior High and High School Youth Working or Volunteering with Children or Youth* and will abide by them at all times. We also understand and agree the parent/guardian will be notified at the time of any infraction requiring dismissal from any work or volunteer assignment at the school or parish or other setting where the student is working or ministering, and that he/she will be sent home at the expense of his/her parent or guardian.

Print Name of Youth: \_\_\_\_\_

Work or Volunteer Position: \_\_\_\_\_

School or Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Youth Volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature and Title of Witness: \_\_\_\_\_

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

## ADMISSIONS STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

SMS is a nondiscriminatory school open to all children aged 4 through 14, as per the Archdiocesan policy outlined below. Although SMS is neither equipped nor staffed to offer certain special education services, an effort is made to accommodate students who have completed a learning assessment such as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan, which was conducted through the student's home school, a private evaluator, or a local education agency. In every effort to assist students who may be having difficulty either academically or behaviorally, SMS also has a Student Success Team (SST) which consists of many members such as the principal, school psychologist, and various designated teachers. The SST is in place to help identify the areas of need for the student, implement interventions in the classroom and/or at home, and track the progress of the student. After the initial intervention is in place for a determined amount of time by the SST, another meeting will be conducted with the SST and the guardian of the student in order to report updates, progress, and/or alternative steps that need to be taken to ensure the success of the student.

Periodically, students are referred to the public schools or to private services for a full learning assessment. In the event that the school recommends such an assessment, parents are expected to cooperate with the process. Below you will find the steps outlined in regards to the referral process for a learning assessment:

- The SST has held a meeting for the student in order to identify the area of concern and implemented an intervention. In some cases, an SST may not be held prior to a recommendation for a learning assessment.
- A referral is made for the student to be evaluated by the principal, teacher, parent, or school psychologist.
- Once the ***Request for Assessment Form*** from SMS has been filled out and the parent has signed the form, it should be turned in to the Special Education Department of the student's home school. (public school ) The home school then has 15 school days to respond to the request for assessment.
- Once the assessment plan has been signed by the student's guardian, the student's home school has 60 school days to complete the assessment and hold an IEP meeting. In this meeting, the school psychologist and IEP team will go over the assessment results and give the guardian a copy of the IEP report. If the student is found eligible for Special Education Services, there will be various accommodations made for the student in the classroom and/or at home.
- SMS requires parents to submit a copy of the IEP report. A meeting will then be held to discuss the results and accommodations suggested for the student.

Where special needs are identified and programs/procedures are prescribed, the faculty and administration will evaluate its ability to provide an optimal learning environment **for all children in the classroom**. SMS strives to meet the needs of each student, however in the event that SMS is unable to provide the most optimal learning environment, a recommendation for an alternative educational setting may be made in the best interest of the student.

Because there are limited openings at each grade level, the following criteria will strongly influence a student's eligibility for admission:

- Relationship to currently enrolled students (sibling preference)
- Family membership in Saint Mark Parish

- Attendance at a scheduled “*Admission Outreach Program*” session
- Other Catholic/Christian affiliation
- Commitment to Catholic education through the elementary years
- Academic and social developmental appropriateness for the SMS program
- Family Interview
- Student Assessment

## ADMISSION INTERVIEW AND EVALUATION

All applicants and their parents/guardians will be interviewed by the principal prior to admission, and complete a reading and mathematical skills evaluation administered by a teacher. Final admission is based upon the following submissions to SMS:

- Completed application for admission
- Interview and academic and developmental evaluation of grade-level readiness
- Approval for release of prior academic records
- Completed medical report
- Registration fee (non-refundable)
- Confidential administrative recommendation from the applicant's current school
- Preferences shall be given to active members of the parish.
- All students must comply with current California immunization and health requirements prior to enrollment.
- St. Mark School strives to make Catholic education accessible to as many students as possible, both with its educational and financial aid programs; however, it may have insufficient resources to serve the educational needs of all students.
- The pastor and principal will review a students' continued eligibility for enrollment.

The following are the suggested age requirements:

- The required age for kindergarten students is five (5) years of age on or before September 1, (July 1 is the recommended cut off age.)
- The required age for transitional kindergarten is four (4) years of age on or before September 1, (July 1 is recommended cut off age.)
- The recommended age for first grade students is six (6) years of age on or before September 1.

In questionable cases, the Administration reserves the right to withhold admission or grade placement to any child pending the results of placement tests, visits with counselors, or the consideration of further information that may aid the Administration in considering the best interests of the child and the classroom.

## INCLUSION PROCEDURES

Through the mission of the Archdiocese, our schools strive to serve children with varied learning needs. All educators in Archdiocesan schools follow “Directions for the Inclusion Process in Catholic Schools: Support Team Education Plan Process (STEP) and Minor Adjustment Plan Process (MAP)”. Parents or guardians who feel that their student may need a minor adjustment to enable him/her to participate in the general education curriculum of the school should consult the student’s teacher and principal to determine how best to meet the students needs. Parents or guardians may request the “Disability Discrimination Complaint Review Process” from the principal to address unresolved issues. Here at Saint Mark’s School, our Student Success Team (SST) serves these goals. Please see above for the appropriate steps regarding the SST process.

## GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

### **School Hours**

Full-day classes begin at 7:45 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. Friday classes end at 12:30 p.m.

Student drop-off time: 7:25 - 7:40 a.m.

Warning bell: 7:40 AM

Final bell 7:43 AM

Morning Assembly 7:43 - 7:48 AM

Student dismissal time: 3:00 - 3:15 p.m. (12:30 – 12:45 on Fridays)

After-School Programs: 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. (Monday – Thursday)

Friday Schedule 12:30 dismissal time (Homework Club still provided)

Student Liturgical Choir rehearses from 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

After school programs finish at 3:00 p.m.

We request your cooperation in adhering to these drop-off/pickup times. We cannot be responsible for the safety of your child before the gates are opened at 7:25 a.m. The gates into the parking lot will be closed at 7:43 AM, after which students must be escorted by parents through the front door of school. Please note also that it is disruptive to the classroom and the child when late arrivals occur. We ask your continued help in assuring timeliness and punctuality.

## **HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS**

At Saint Mark School, we measure success in ways that go well beyond criteria-referenced test scores and grades. “Success” for each student is more than a grade-point-average and can include the following:

- Self-motivation and growth over time
- Adherence to the tenets of the PeaceBuilder Program and the daily pledge taken as a student at SMS
- Accountability and responsibility
- Respect for the property and space of others
- Curious and engaged approach to learning
- Attentiveness in group lessons
- Consistent completion of work
- Ability to work independently and to follow directions
- Sensitivity to the feelings of others
- Engagement in the life of the school
- Positive response to constructive input

SMS helps to establish those habits that will enable each child to fulfill his/her unique potential, and develop a love of learning.

Report cards and interim reports reflect both numeric measures of academic performance and commentary related to each student’s mastery level of learning behaviors, thus providing a fuller picture of the student’s effort and success. The SMS end of the year recognition assembly seeks to honor students who have participated in the life of the school as good citizens and engaged learners.

## **CONFERENCES AND PROGRESS REPORTS**

Classroom performance is assessed daily by teachers with respect to behavior (appropriate/inappropriate) and work effort (complete/incomplete) and noted in each student’s agenda or by way of a weekly summary. The academic year is divided into three reporting units, or trimesters, with interim reports of performance also provided. The six performance updates throughout the year (three interim reports and three trimester reports) provide an opportunity for parents, students and teachers to work together to maximize the classroom experience for each student. The school-wide parent/teacher conferences are scheduled for the first trimester just after the interim report, as noted on the school calendar. Additional conferences and updates to meet specific concerns may be scheduled at mutually convenient times. Parents are invited to contact teachers at any time throughout the year to schedule meetings as needed. Should a teacher request a meeting with a parent, it is expected that the parent make every effort to be available.

## HOMEWORK

Homework is intended to reflect the daily work and themes of the classroom, and to include additional practice, as needed, across subject areas. Parents/guardians should be aware of assignments to help guide their children in the development of good work habits. Additional projects and long-term assignments are given and are to be integrated with daily work in such a way that last-minute “overloads” are prevented.

All students are made aware of their daily/weekly assignments by their instructors and are required to update their agendas/planners daily with this information. While some instructors may use *Gradelink* to update assignments prior to entering grades, students are primarily responsible for knowing their homework daily. Parents should communicate with their children regarding homework first, before requesting additional communication from teachers. This will serve to cultivate a sense of responsibility among students for their homework.

Guidelines for **written** daily homework are as follows:

K – not to exceed 15 minutes	5 – not to exceed 60 minutes
1 - not to exceed 20 minutes	6 – not to exceed 70 minutes
2 - not to exceed 30 minutes	7 – not to exceed 90 minutes
3 – not to exceed 35 minutes	8 – not to exceed 90 minutes
4 – not to exceed 40 minutes	

In addition to the regular homework, reading is always expected and students are guided in their independent reading using accelerated reader (AR). Classroom teachers may assign reasonable reading goals for completion at home on a regular basis.

**If your child is experiencing difficulty understanding or completing homework within a reasonable time period, please contact his/her classroom teacher as soon as possible for review, remediation or modification.**

## FIELD TRIPS

Field trips supplement classroom experiences and are integral to the curriculum. Teachers will organize field trips throughout the school year. Permission slips are sent out well in advance to parents. Field trips are a required part of the school’s academic program, therefore attendance is required. Field trip fees may be included for items such as cost of admission and transportation. Students will most likely bring their own lunch, unless otherwise planned and communicated. Typically students will wear their school uniform. Parent chaperones must be Virtus trained and the number of parent chaperons will depend on the need. All contact between parents and students on the day of the trip must go through the school office, as students will not have access to cell phones during field trips.

## SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM

Community service is a key aspect of our Christian ministry at SMS. Throughout the year, each classroom will participate in events that support local and global community needs. Guidelines will be established and communicated by the homeroom teacher.

## SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Students may pack a nutritious lunch, or select in advance from our weekly catered options. Students who are participating in “hot” lunch must provide a reusable lunch tray (bento style box) for reuse. This is required in order to cultivate life-long habits around sustainability and to reduce the trash and waste stream on campus. Students are encouraged to be trained at home in how to clean/rinse out their lunch tray for reuse. The one recommended by the school is dishwasher safe.

**Red (staining) juices and soda pop are not permitted. Beverages other than water and milk are discouraged. Please include a healthy snack for morning recess!**

We recommend that you involve your child in the full planning and preparation of his or her lunch and snack by working together to:

- ❖ Plan a menu for the week that includes nutritious selections from the 5 food groups.
  - Protein, fruits, vegetables, complex carbohydrates, fiber, water, etc.
- ❖ Plan a shopping list; shop together; put groceries away together.
- ❖ Pack lunch the evening before school and freeze or refrigerate it.
- ❖ Avoid processed foods and foods with a preservatives and nitrites - they are not healthy and they impact on student behavior and ability to concentrate effectively.
- ❖ Providing lean sources of protein, milk products and fiber are healthful for growing children who who need to concentrate and maintain a healthful emotional state all day at school is essential.

## SPECIAL TREATS

**Birthday celebrations are fun for everyone, and we invite parents to communicate with your child’s homeroom teacher in regards to what the policy is regarding student birthdays in that class. If you will be bringing a “treat” to school please make sure that it is a *healthy* treat (such as a fruit or vegetable tray – **no cake/candy/sugar treats**) for your child to share with his/her class at a time and day agreed upon by the homeroom teacher(s). Please consult with your child’s homeroom teacher for various ideas of healthy treat options if needed. Each homeroom decides on a birthday policy and room parents facilitate these celebrations, typically by month.**

## RECESS AND LUNCH SUPERVISION

Only designated lunch and recess supervisors may be on the school yard during lunch and recess times.



## MEDICAL

The Department of Health requires exclusion from school for the following communicable conditions:

- ❖ Chicken Pox
- ❖ Head Lice
- ❖ Pinkeye/Conjunctivitis
- ❖ Polio
- ❖ Diphtheria
- ❖ Scarlet Fever
- ❖ Measles
- ❖ Other Strep Infections
- ❖ Mumps
- ❖ Whooping Cough (pertussis)
- ❖ German Measles

Please report these conditions to the school immediately. Because they are communicable, notification to all other potentially exposed students and their families is required by law for the purpose of containment and prevention.

## MEDICAL REPORT

A medical examination report signed by a physician is required for all students entering SMS for the first time. Medical examination report forms are included in the registration packet and are available at the school.

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Physical examinations are required for all new students immediately prior to entrance to school.

All required immunizations must be up-to-date and documented by your family doctor. Complete immunization records or waivers\* will be required before entering school. Required immunizations are as follows\*\*:

- ❖ 4 DPT (or DT/TD)
- ❖ 3 OPV (Polio)
- ❖ 2 MMR (measles/Mumps/Rubella)
- ❖ Hepatitis B series (3 doses) – Now required for all new school entrants
- ❖ Varicella (chickenpox) – unless immunity is documented (by a notation on the immunization form stating that the student has had chickenpox).

\*Where medical waivers are in use, an outbreak of one of the above conditions may require temporary removal of the unprotected child from school.

\*\* See the Appendix for California Code.

## FEVER

Fever is a warning that the body is fighting illness. If your child is running a fever, he/she should be kept at home and at rest until he/she has been **fever-free for 24 hours**. In the event that a student runs a fever while at school, we will contact his/her parent/guardian for pick-up as soon as possible. Children who are running a fever **will not be allowed to participate in school events or after-school activities. Children will be asked if they were given aspirin-like products in advance of school due to fever symptoms.**

## MEDICATION

When prescription or over-the-counter medicine must be administered during school hours the following procedures must be followed:

- ❖ A copy of the doctor's orders or prescription information must be provided to the school administration and to the classroom teacher. The type and purpose of the medication must be clearly stated on the original container or box.
- ❖ Directions for administration (time/frequency/dose) are to be clearly stated and understood. A form will be provided for this purpose.
- ❖ All medications are to be kept in a designated area in the main school office. Rescue medications (inhalers/epi-pens/etc.) may be held by the student (age dependent) or the classroom or supervising teacher.
- ❖ The teacher or administrator must dispense and record the appropriate administration of the medication.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

Our school calendar is compiled each spring with a distribution of key dates, such as the start and end of the school year, holidays, and vacation. The school calendar is updated throughout the year and can be accessed via the school's website and downloaded to personal devices for each access. A Calendar Committee meets beginning in January to plan for the upcoming school year and carefully reviews the prior year's calendar to make adjustments and improvements. Parent representatives serve on this committee.

## ATTENDANCE

Per California state law, school is compulsory for children aged 5 through 16; this, additionally, includes that students miss no more than 10 percent of school classes each year. In order that your child/children receive the best education possible, we require the cooperation of parents/guardians in assuring that children attend SMS with regularity and timeliness, thus enabling our students to progress consistently.

## **MORNING ARRIVAL & DROP-OFF PROCEDURES:**

Students can be dropped off on the schoolyard beginning at 7:25 AM. Parents can either use the “car line” for drop-off or can walk onto the yard with their child/children. The warning bell rings at 7:40 AM. At that time, students are required to line up with their class and prepare to focus on morning prayer and announcements. At 7:43 AM, the final bell rings. Students who arrive after the final bell are considered tardy. The gates to the yard are locked at 7:43 AM. Parents dropping off after this time are asked to go to the front entrance and to follow the procedure outlined below.

Morning Assembly is a central part of the school day and includes the recognition of birthdays, special announcements, prayer, and day-to-day information and updates. Attendance encourages and promotes school community; thank you for ensuring your child/children participate.

### **DISMISSAL**

At dismissal time, children leave the building adjacent to the parking lot with their teacher. Parking lot supervision is provided until 3:15 PM, Monday through Thursday, and until 12:45 PM on Friday. Teachers monitor with whom each student leaves. Students are only allowed to leave campus with their parents or an approved adult. At the beginning of the school year, parents can designate with whom their children can leave. It is a parent’s responsibility to update this list, as needed, throughout the school year.

Only those children authorized and under supervision may remain in the school building or yard after the designated hours. Any unsupervised students who remain at school after 3:15 PM will be sent to Homework Club and charged accordingly. Students who have permission to walk or bike home must sign out at the front office before leaving. ***If you park to pick up your child, you must walk to the student line-up to receive your child. Parents are requested to wait for their children OUTSIDE of the school building.***

\*Please note that, aside from a brief greeting, it is not appropriate to engage teachers in in-depth discussion about a student during pick-up or drop-off. In the event that such a discussion is needed, please contact the teachers and arrange for a meeting.

## TARDINESS AND ABSENCES

Please remember that tardiness is disruptive to the learning process for all children. Tardiness and absenteeism are noted on all school records. Students arriving after 7:43 AM will be considered tardy. Students admitted after 8:15 will be marked as being absent for half day; the same applies if the child leaves before 2:30.

When a student is tardy, we request that *parents/guardians accompany the child into school and check in through the office* to assure that we note his/her arrival for our records. *Under no circumstances is it ever safe or appropriate to drop off a child/children on Coeur d'Alene and wait in your car while they ring the bell and are let into the school building.*

In the event of an absence the parent/guardian must *contact the school office by 8:15 AM* to report the child's name, class and the approximate or anticipated duration of the absence. Options for reporting an absence include: leaving a message on the school's voicemail or sending an email to the Office Manager ([mdonaldson@stmarkschool.com](mailto:mdonaldson@stmarkschool.com)). If SMS is not notified, a call will be made to the parent or guardian of the absent student. Please note that notifying a teacher via email is acceptable for notification purposes, however please include the Office Manager and the School Secretary on the email. In the event that SMS receives an email regarding attendance, a follow-up phone call may be made to confirm the absence for that day. **It is expected when the student first returns to school a *Return to School Form* explanation regarding the absence is required.**

We are required to maintain documentation in the form of a *Return to School Form* whenever a child returns to the classroom. Written excuses will be collected and maintained in the office. Parents will be contacted if an excuse is not provided upon a child's return to school.

In the event that a student is tardy and/or absent for more than **5 times in a trimester** a phone conference will be held between the parent/guardian of the student and the principal in order to remedy the amount of tardies and/or absences (or combination thereof). In the case that the tardies and/or absences persist after the phone conference, a mandatory meeting will be held. The goal at SMS is to partner with parents in order to help provide the most favorable learning environment for the student, which includes providing the student with full access to their education.

A student returning after having a contagious disease or an illness of two weeks or more must have a doctor's release form stating that the student may return to school.

## STUDENT RELEASE DURING SCHOOL HOURS

So that we may account for all children during the regular school day, we ask that early dismissals be authorized in writing by the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians who wish to pick up their child/children early are required to check in at the school office. ***Because student learning is so important, we vehemently request parents/guardians to make doctors and other appointments for Friday afternoons or after school hours.***

## VACATIONS

Continuity in the school year affects each child's educational success. It is expected that students will be in class during all regular sessions. Please plan your vacations to coincide with our school calendar. Completion of curricula and assignments missed as a result of voluntary absences is the sole responsibility of the student.

## PLANNED ABSENCES

SMS recognizes that, occasionally, there may be a need for a planned absence. In this case, we ask that parents complete the planned absence form *at least* two weeks in advance of the planned absence. This form is posted to the website and contained in the handbook. This form requires the signature of all teachers whose classes will be missed, the parent, and the principal. Teachers reserve the right not to make up work and instruction missed during these absences. Planned absences are discouraged.

## ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES

### BICYCLES

All bike riders must wear approved helmets, as required by law. Students are asked to dismount and walk their bicycles across the schoolyard. In the interest of safety, riding bicycles in the school yard area is prohibited at all times. It is our policy to take the bicycle away from the student for one week if it is used in the school yard. This will also apply if the bicycle is loaned to another student who commits the offense. Every child should lock his/her bicycle to prevent theft. We support and appreciate families who bike and/or walk to school!

### CARLINE AND PARKING

The gates to the pick-up area will open at 2:45 PM, after our last physical education class has cleared the area. Only cars driving through will be allowed to enter. Drive-through is a **NO CELL PHONE ZONE!** For the safety of all, please be sure that your attention is completely focused on the activity of the drive-through area. Please put your car in **PARK** when the children are entering or exiting the vehicle. **CHILDREN ENTER ON THE RIGHT (PASSENGER) SIDE OF THE CAR AND WHEN INSTRUCTED BY CAR LINE AIDES, AFTER THE CAR FACES THE CHURCH (EAST).** Parents can also park in the Garfield lot and enter the yard via the gate on the south side of the church. Please do not park in the Coeur d'Alene lot; the Garfield Lot is safer and more accessible to the school yard. Parents are encouraged to park in the surrounding neighborhood and walk their children onto the school yard. Make sure to use crosswalks -- no illegal j-walking! Out of respect for our neighbors, please do not obstruct traffic by parking on the south side of the street. If you obstruct traffic, you may be ticketed by a parking enforcement officer.

### LEAVING THE SCHOOLYARD

No child is to leave the schoolyard for any reason during or after school hours unless given permission and accompanied by an authorized adult.

For safety reasons, students participating in after-school activities (sports or otherwise) *are not* allowed to leave campus between the end of school and after-school activities, unless accompanied by a parent or authorized adult.

### AFTER SCHOOL HOURS PICK-UP

Whenever a child is to be picked up from *Homework Club*, after-school activities, or whenever the gate is closed and locked, parents must park and enter through the front door of SMS to receive their children. Follow the procedures for entrance that are posted at this location. Safety and security are a priority and these procedures were developed with that in mind. Occasionally the walk-in gate on the yard may be used if there is an attendant there to check off and identify those seeking entrance.

### LOST AND FOUND

All personal items, including clothing and lunch boxes, should be labeled with the student's name. We request that parents use the **student's first name and last initial**. If an article is left at school, it will be put in the lost and found in the school hallway. Items not labeled or claimed within two weeks will be given away or become part of the *SMS Used Uniform* collection.

### TELEPHONE USE/CELL PHONES/ELECTRONICS

It is understood that cell phones are an important communication link between children and their families, especially in times of emergency. Students' cell phones *must* be turned off during the school day, and stored in

the student's backpack. The consequences for using a cell phone during the school day without permission from an instructor and/or the principal are as follows: the phone will be taken away and be stored in the school office; the phone will not be returned to the student until the parent has been notified; on a case-to-case basis, the student may not be allowed to have a phone at school until further noticed. The school reserves the right to access and review any information/communication on a cell phone if a student uses it without permission. Students are reminded to carefully review the *Technology Acceptable Use Policy* that they sign each year. Violations of the Acceptable Use Policy on and off campus will result in a mandatory meeting with the student and/or guardians. On a case-to-case basis this violation could lead to punishment, suspension, or expulsion from SMS. A copy of the Acceptable Use Policy is provided in the back of the handbook for your reference.

***Other electronic devices not directly used for approved educational purposes, including iPads, toys, etc., should be left at home.*** SMS will not assume responsibility for any such lost or stolen electronic devices. Devices found or seen during school hours will be confiscated.

### **CARE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Students are responsible for the care of school and personal property. Teachers may require certain books to be covered at all times. Folders and notebooks should be cared for, with name and class designation. If damage should occur to school property because of student negligence, the student and his/her family will be held financially responsible. The choice of repair or replacement will be at the school's discretion.

### **WORK PERMITS**

Under California and other relevant laws, a minor student may not work without a work permit issued by the appropriate authority. To obtain a work permit, certain information is required from the student's school. Information regarding work permits and how to apply is available from the California Department of Education website: [www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov).

The minor student, after obtaining a promise of employment, must obtain a "Statement of Intent to Employ Minor and Request for Work Permit." The minor, the employer, and the parent/guardian must each complete their sections and submit the completed application to the school. The school will verify the information entered on the application by the minor and parent/guardian and will also examine the student's records and consult the teacher to confirm the student's satisfactory academic achievement to date. The student must then submit the form to the work permit issuing authority. If all requirements are met, the work permit issuing authority may issue the "Permit to Employ and Work." The work permit issuing authority is the Superintendent of the local public school or those persons authorized in writing by the Superintendent to issue the permit.

A copy of the signed work permit must be kept in the student's file.

### **STUDENT INSURANCE**

The student insurance program is provided for all full time students in Archdiocesan schools. This program assists only with medical expenses incurred because of accidental bodily injury sustained by students while attending school, while traveling to or from school or while participating in a school sponsored and supervised activity, including school sponsored sport and extended day programs.

### **RECEIPTS/EXPENSE REPORTS/ REIMBURSEMENT (PAC ACTIVITY)**

All expenditures must be pre-approved by the principal. All receipts must be accompanied by an expense report form and submitted to the Office for reimbursement no later than 30 days after the event.

## EXPECTATIONS AND STANDARDS

### PARENT/GUARDIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Each SMS parent/guardian is expected to:

- ❖ Support and maintain the Christian and educational standards of SMS.
- ❖ Communicate and work in cooperation with the faculty, staff and administration of the school.
- ❖ Participate actively in achieving the mission and promoting the ongoing vision of the school.
- ❖ Attend the grade-level evening liturgies and pot-lucks
- ❖ Attend SMS all-school meetings (Parent Orientation and State of the School) and parent-teacher conferences.
- ❖ Support and promote all school guidelines and rules
- ❖ Support classroom programs, trips, activities and assignments including the 5th-8th grade “camping” program.
- ❖ Communicate with teachers when questions arise concerning classroom activities in a manner that is constructive and respectful.
- ❖ Attend Friday morning school masses whenever possible.
- ❖ Participate in all fundraising endeavors including the auction, Education Fund and the Fall Festival.

### RECOMMENDED TRANSFER OF A CHILD

Under normal circumstances, a pupil is not to be deprived of a Catholic education on grounds relating to the attitude or actions of parents/guardians. It is recognized, however, that a situation could arise in which the uncooperative or disruptive attitude of a parent/guardian might so diminish the effectiveness of the educational process that continued matriculation in the school may be impossible. ***Where parental/guardian interactions with the faculty, staff, students or administration are deemed inappropriate or detrimental to the work of the school***, SMS reserves the right to invoke the regulations governing recommended transfer of the student (*Archdiocesan Handbook*).

### PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parental involvement is essential to the mission and the success of the school. At the beginning of the school year we will ask each parent/guardian to volunteer via our ***Parent Participation Form***. There are innumerable opportunities to share your time and talents, so don't wait to be asked! Please let the office, room parents and PAC officers know what you like to do, or how you can support our mission, and we *promise* to utilize your talents! Without your special gifts, we cannot flourish. God bless you! Parents are expected to contribute twenty hours of service per school year per family.

### PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATIONS

Clear and frequent communication between teachers and parents/guardians is the best formula for educational success, and we strongly encourage our parents/guardians to communicate with their child's teacher often.



When addressing specific concerns the following steps should be taken in this order:

- 1) **Contact the teacher.** Schedule a time when you and your child's teacher can sit down and give the issue your undivided attention. Working in a spirit of cooperation will enable all parties to more fully support the student. Define the circumstances that will constitute a satisfactory resolution. Please schedule follow-up meetings, periodic written feedback or phone contact through the school. Each teacher has a SMS e-mail address for use by parents. *Gradelink* is an excellent tool to keep track of students' grades and assignments. Each student is also given an *Agenda* for daily use and for communication with parents. Regular discussion and use of this tool is advised.
- 2) **Contact the Principal.** If necessary, contact the Principal to discuss the history of a problem, or extraordinary needs that require the Principal's attention.

#### WEEKLY MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL AND WEBSITE

Important home/school correspondence and our bi-weekly newsletter are included in the Bi-Weekly Message from the Principal. Bi-Weekly newsletters are also posted at our SMS website: [www.stmarkschool.com](http://www.stmarkschool.com)

#### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Each student of SMS is expected to:

- ❖ Support and maintain the standards of the school outlined in this handbook
- ❖ Strive to live the tenets of the *Peacebuilder Program*
- ❖ Work to his/her best ability
- ❖ Follow classroom expectations and rules
- ❖ Respect others
- ❖ Respect our school including its classrooms and grounds
- ❖ Respect the environment and our natural resources

**The administration reserves the right to deny continued access to a classroom based upon ongoing disruption or disturbance and in addition to those who do not have the complete and proper uniform.**

#### DRESS CODE

At school, being "in uniform" means more than simply wearing the designated SMS clothing and shoes. Emphasis is placed upon neatness, cleanliness, hygiene, appropriateness and comfort for work at school. Clothing should be sized to fit, without holes, neither faded nor frayed, and should not be worn inside out.

Saint Mark students are expected to adhere to the uniform and grooming code at all times. Notes must be submitted to explain exceptions. Fads, and other current philosophical statements made through clothing, jewelry, hair styles etc. are not allowed at SMS. We want students to see themselves and others as unique and special; we strive to have these unique qualities made manifest from the inside out vs. via external factors such as clothing and hair style.

The SMS uniform is required on all regular school days. It includes the uniform clothing provided by *Land's End*, and **black, navy and/or white shoes. Whether a student wears white, black or navy shoes these main**

**colors must comprise at least 80% of the shoe's color overall. Black shoes may have some white on them and white shoes may have some black on them, and navy shoes may have some white on them. No other colors will be allowed. Should a student arrive wearing shoes that do not conform to this shoe code they will be sent to the office and uniform shoes will have to be provided by a parent. We recognize that this may be inconvenient and that is why we urge all students to arrive at school wearing the proper shoes.**

Acceptable uniform dress includes wearing:

- ❖ Casual uniforms (including uniform polo shirts and no ties) on regular school days
- ❖ PE uniforms on scheduled PE days
- ❖ Dress uniform (SMS-logo shirts/ties/sweaters/sweater vests) for school liturgies and other special designated events.

**The full uniform policy and code may be referenced in the Appendix to this manual.**

**All hair must be clean, neatly styled and secured in such a manner that it will not fall in the eyes and face.** All hair must be a natural color and there should be no highlights. Makeup and colored nail polish may not be worn. Jewelry, if worn, must be simple and not excessive in amount. No rubber-band bracelets are allowed or items that distract from student learning.

All boys must have a boy's regular haircut, and present a clean-cut and neat appearance. Hair must be above the collar in the back and above the top of the ear. Hair must be out of the eyes and clean. Boys are not to wear earrings or body piercing ornamentation at any time. The administration of SMS reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry, and to restrict anything that is deemed to be distracting or inappropriate. The length of the hair on the side of a student's head must be relatively the same length as the hair on top of the head. No shaved heads/side of heads will be allowed. This has become a distraction at school which we want to avoid.

Girls may only wear stud earrings, one in each ear lobe. All jewelry must blend with the uniform and be appropriate for school. Body piercing ornamentation other than studs in single-pierced ear lobes is not allowed. Skirt length may not be shorter than two inches above the knee. The administration of SMS reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry, and to restrict anything that is deemed to be distracting or inappropriate.

#### **OUTER WEAR AND CHANGE OF CLOTHING - ALL ITEMS NEED TO HAVE NAME LABELS!**

Please ensure that during cold and rainy weather, your child wears appropriate clothing, including a coat, hat and gloves (as needed). All students go outdoors for recess (weather permitting) and should be dressed accordingly.

Only school sweaters and approved school **non-hooded** sweatshirts (for 8<sup>th</sup> grade, only) may be worn on top of uniforms inside the school.

Please send a complete change of clothing in a labeled plastic bag for TK, Kindergarten and Lower Elementary children – just in case! Make sure that the items are changed as students grow over the course of the year!

#### **\$1 THEME DAYS & FREE DRESS DAYS**

Each month Student Council designates a "\$1 Theme Day" to raise money for service and outreach projects. Additionally, SMS provides "Free Dress" days to celebrate or promote special events. Once again, emphasis is

placed upon neatness, cleanliness, appropriateness and comfort for work at school. As a general guide, “free dress” should provide the same body coverage as that provided by uniforms! ***If it doesn’t show on a uniform day, it shouldn’t show on a free dress day!*** Clothing should be sized to fit, without holes, neither faded nor frayed, nor worn inside out. Inappropriate logos/graphics/sayings are not allowed. Please be sure that socks that come well above the ankle and closed-toe athletic shoes are worn. Shoes worn on free dress days must be appropriate for play yard activities. As always, the administration of SMS reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, and will contact parents if a student’s dress does not meet these guidelines. Occasionally “free dress” can include “play” free dress and students are allowed to wear appropriate shorts, casual pants and shoes. Adherence to the above guidelines and responsible decision making is expected. Students who may have questions about what is “appropriate” play free dress should consult with their homeroom teacher in advance.

### **HAIR, NAILS, AND JEWELRY**

**SMS administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, haircut, hairstyle and jewelry and to restrict any manifestation thereof deemed to be distracting or inappropriate both inside and outside the school building.**

### **DISCIPLINARY POLICY**

Saint Mark School follows a principle-based approach to discipline. Behavioral expectations are made clear to students and their parents through verbal and written communication. In some instances specific rules exist, as in the case of our dress code. **Where a detailed rule in support of a recognized code or principle of acceptable conduct does not exist, Saint Mark School and its representatives reserve the right to determine the appropriateness of a student’s behavior and consequences thereof. Any circumstance disruptive to the educational process or which presents a hazard to the health or safety of staff or students will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.** Disciplinary actions may include suspension and/or expulsion. SMS fully supports the rules set forth in the State of California licensing rules for school and childcare centers, and adheres to the Archdiocese of Los Angeles guidelines for dealing with physical, verbal and emotional harassment (see appendix).

### **CLASSROOM DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES: CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

SMS believes in a positive approach to discipline in the classrooms, emphasizing the reinforcement of good behavior and the redirection of unacceptable behavior. When students disagree, conflict resolution techniques are used. All conflict resolution begins in prayer.

### **CORRECTING STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

It is our goal as educators to guide our students in self-control, responsibility and accountability. We strive to create an environment where students’ grow in their ability to be independent problem-solvers and self-directed learners and community members. To this end the goal is to implement logical consequences for school infractions.

In most instances, a visual reminder or word is sufficient to redirect a student to appropriate behavior and choices with no further follow-up. When teachers perceive lack of self-governance, a note in the daily student planner (Agenda) may designate behavior as “inappropriate”. If reminders are insufficient, physical relocation of the student may be warranted to prevent disruption of the learning process. An Office Referral and parental

notification may also be required at the discretion of the classroom teacher. Multiple Office Referrals will precipitate a meeting with parents to discuss the nature of the problem and how best to address it. In the case of an egregious infraction, as determined by faculty members in consultation with administration, the student may be removed from the classroom with a call to parents. In all instances, faculty and administration endeavor to deal and accommodate the uniqueness of individual student's circumstances.

Our policy for dealing with discipline problems not readily handled at the classroom level is as follows:

- ❖ Communicate with parents/guardians to enlist their involvement, obtain relevant information, or update them on specific issues.
- ❖ Commit to follow through in establishing and assuring achievement of goals for improvement,
- ❖ When needed, recommend or refer the student's/family to an appropriate professional organization for continuing evaluation.
- ❖ Review and evaluate the progress of the student and determine the most appropriate placement for the student.

**The administration reserves the right to deny continued access to a classroom based upon ongoing disruption or disturbance.**

#### **GRIEVANCE AND ARBITRATION PROCEDURES**

Saint Mark Elementary School adheres to the grievance and arbitration procedures of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, *Parent/Student Complaint Review Process*, noted below.

The following Archdiocesan *Code of Christian Conduct Covering Students and Parents/Guardians* details expectations, guidelines and recourse for interactions, discipline, suspension, expulsion, and the occurrence of harassment, hazing and threatening behavior at Saint Mark School.

## ARCHDIOCESAN CODE OF CHRISTIAN CONDUCT COVERING STUDENTS AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The students' interest in receiving a quality, morally based education can be served if students, parents, and school officials work together. Normally, differences between these individuals can be resolved. In some rare instances, however, the school may find it necessary, in its discretion, to require parents/guardians to withdraw their children.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that the students and parents/guardians shall conform themselves to standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the school, as determined by the school in its discretion. These principles include, but are not limited to any policies or procedures set forth in any student/parent handbook of the school.

These Christian principles further include, but are not limited to, the following:

Parents/guardians are expected to work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the school.

Students and parents/guardians may respectfully express their concerns about the school operation and its personnel. However, they may not do so in a manner that is discourteous, scandalous, rumor driven, disruptive, threatening, hostile, or divisive.

- ❖ Any parent/guardian or other person whose conduct in a place where a school employee is required to be in the course of his/her duties materially disrupts classwork or extracurricular activities or involves substantial disorder is guilty of a misdemeanor. This statement does not apply to any otherwise lawful employee concerted activity, including but not limited to, picketing and the distribution of handbills.
- ❖ Any parent/guardian, or other person who insults or abuses the principal or any teacher in the presence of other school personnel, students or parents and at a place which is on school premises or public sidewalks, streets, or other public ways adjacent to school premises or at some other place if the principal or teacher is required to be at such other place in connection with assigned school activities, risks the continuation of their child in the school.
- ❖ These expectations for students and parents/guardians include, but are not limited to; all school-sponsored programs and events (e.g., extended care, athletics, field trips, etc.).

**The school reserves the right to determine, in its discretion, when conduct is of such a severe nature as to warrant immediate action without warning.**

## DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an aspect of moral guidance and not a form of punishment. The purpose of discipline is to provide a school climate conducive to learning and one that promotes character development.

Discipline is maintained in a classroom or school when students work cooperatively with the principal, the teachers, and their classmates towards the attainment of the class and school objectives. However, it should be noted that the legitimate interest of the school extends beyond the school day and beyond the school hours.

### CONDITIONS OF SUSPENSION

- ❖ Any of the reasons listed for expulsion where mitigating circumstances exist may be adequate cause for suspension of a student:
- ❖ No student shall be suspended from an elementary school for more than two consecutive weeks.
- ❖ Notice of suspension must be given to the parents/guardians by telephone or in a conference.
- ❖ The principal shall schedule a conference with the suspended student's parents/guardians to discuss matters pertinent to the suspension especially the means by which the parents/guardians and the school can cooperatively encourage the student to improve behavior. The suspended student may be present at the conference.
- ❖ In no case will a teacher on his/her own authority suspend a student.

### EXPULSION

Reasons for expulsion are, but are not limited to, the following offenses committed by students:

- ❖ Actions gravely detrimental to the moral and spiritual welfare of other students.
- ❖ Habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- ❖ Assault, battery or any threat of force or violence directed toward any school personnel or student.
- ❖ Bullying or harassing school personnel or other students.
- ❖ Open, persistent defiance of the authority of the teacher.
- ❖ Continued willful disobedience.
- ❖ Use, sale or possession of narcotics, drugs or any other controlled substance.
- ❖ Use, sale, distribution, or possession of any alcoholic beverages on or near school premises.
- ❖ Smoking or having tobacco.
- ❖ Stealing
- ❖ Forging signatures
- ❖ Cheating or plagiarism
- ❖ Willful cutting, defacing or otherwise injuring in any way property, real or personal belonging to the

school.

- ❖ Habitual truancy.
- ❖ Possession of harmful weapons (e.g., knives, guns, etc.) or materials that can be used as weapons.
- ❖ Membership in, active involvement in, or affiliation with a gang or group responsible for coercive or violent activity.
- ❖ Actions in or out of school which are detrimental to the school's reputation.
- ❖ Violation of the Electronic Communications Policy policies and guidelines.
- ❖ Inappropriate conduct or behavior unbecoming a student in a Catholic school.

#### **PROCEDURE FOR EXPULSION**

When the reasons for expulsion are purely disciplinary, i.e., when serious moral reasons are not involved, the following steps must be taken:

- ❖ A conference must be held with the parents/guardians, student, teacher, and principal present to advise the family that serious action is contemplated unless there is immediate improvement in behavior. In parish schools, the pastor should be notified of the conference, given an opportunity to attend and provided a report of the discussion.
- ❖ If there is no improvement in behavior, the final decision will be announced at a second conference attended by the principal, teacher, and parents/guardians. If the parents fail, without cause, to attend the conference, the pastor, principal, and teacher will reach a final decision. The final decision rests with the pastor in consultation with the principal.
- ❖ In no case will a teacher on his/her own authority expel a student.
- ❖ Full credit will be given for all work accomplished by the student up to the moment of expulsion.

#### **CASES INVOLVING GRAVE OFFENSES**

- ❖ In cases involving grave offenses, which may include a violation of criminal law or actions so outrageous as to shock the conscience or behavior of the community, the student is immediately suspended and the initial parent-principal conference is dispensed with.
- ❖ The procedure involving cases of grave offenses should be followed when the continued presence of the student at school (even for a short period of time) will, in the reasonable judgment of the principal, pose a serious threat to the health and welfare of another student or students, or faculty members.
- ❖ When immediate suspension is imposed, with probable expulsion, while the case is being investigated, the rules and the consequences of the violation should be clearly explained to the student and parents/guardians.

#### **TIME OF EXPULSION**

- ❖ An expulsion may be made immediately if the reasons are urgent.
- ❖ Only in exceptional cases shall expulsion of an eighth grade student who has been in the school one or

more years be allowed.

- ❖ If an expulsion is to take place during the last quarter of the school year or during the last semester in the case of an eighth grade student, prior approval of the Department of Catholic Schools is required before the expulsion can take effect.
- ❖ If such action is contemplated, approval shall be obtained before the announcement of the final decision to the parents at the meeting described below.

#### **REPORTING OF EXPULSIONS**

- ❖ All expulsions even if they occur at the end of the year, are to be reported by telephone to the elementary supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools within twenty-four hours. The written report, Notice of Dismissal, should be mailed promptly to the elementary supervisor.
- ❖ The attendance office of the local public school district shall be notified immediately of expulsions. A copy of the *Cumulative Student Record* should be held until requested.

#### **RIGHT TO MAKE EXCEPTIONS**

The principal, in consultation with the pastor, retains the right to make exceptions in cases where mitigating circumstances call for a different response than policy suggests.



## HARASSMENT, BULLYING AND HAZING POLICY

Saint Mark School is committed to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment that respects Christian values and is free from harassment, bullying or hazing in any form. Harassment, bullying or hazing of any student by any other student, lay employee, religious, clergy, or school volunteer is prohibited. The school will treat allegations of any such conduct seriously and will review and investigate such allegations in a prompt, confidential and thorough manner. This policy shall be communicated clearly to faculty, staff, volunteers, parents, guardians, and students.

Substantiated acts of harassment, bullying or hazing by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal of the student. Students found to have filed false or frivolous charges will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. For students in grades TK-3, this disciplinary action shall depend on the maturity of the students and the circumstances involved. For students in grades 4 through 8, the disciplinary action may include suspension or dismissal.

**Harassment** occurs when an individual is subjected to treatment or a school environment that is hostile or intimidating based upon a legally protected class, such as race, sex, ethnic origin or religion. It includes, but is not limited to, any or all of the following:

- ❖ Verbal harassment: Derogatory comments and jokes; threatening words spoken to another person.
- ❖ Physical harassment: Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberate impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement.
- ❖ Visual harassment: Derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, drawings, and gestures.
- ❖ Sexual harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Bullying** is the habitual harassing, intimidating, tormenting, browbeating, humiliating, oppressing and/or threatening of another person. Bullying typically consists of direct behaviors, such as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, shoving, and stealing that are initiated by one or more students against a victim or victims. In addition to direct attacks, bullying may also be indirect, such as spreading rumors that cause victims to be socially isolated through intentional exclusion. Whether the bullying is direct or indirect, the key component of bullying is physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly over time to create an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse.

**Hazing** is any method of initiation or pre-initiation into a student organization or student body or any pastime or amusement engaged in with respect to these organizations which causes, or is likely to cause, bodily danger, physical harm, or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm, to any student or other person.

**Cyber Bullying** occurs when students bully each other using the Internet, mobile phones or other cyber technology. This can include, but is not limited to:

- ❖ Sending inappropriate text, e-mail, or instant messages.
- ❖ Posting inappropriate pictures or messages about others in blogs or on Web sites.
- ❖ Using a user name that belongs to someone else to spread rumors or lies about someone.

It is the responsibility of the school to:

- ❖ Establish practices and provide staff development training and age-appropriate information for students, designed to create a school environment free from discrimination, intimidation or harassment.
- ❖ Make all faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians, and volunteers aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward its strict enforcement.
- ❖ Remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile offensive school environment.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- ❖ Conduct himself or herself in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment.
- ❖ Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating, harassing, bullying or hazing.
- ❖ If possible, inform the other person(s) that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome.
- ❖ Report all incidents of discrimination, harassment, bullying or hazing to the principal or teacher.
- ❖ As deemed appropriate, complete a formal, written complaint which will be investigated thoroughly and will involve only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.

### STUDENT THREATS

**All threats by students to inflict serious harm to self or others, or to destroy property, will be taken seriously. Whoever hears or becomes aware of any threat made by a student should immediately report it to the pastor, principal, or a teacher. The principal will notify the police and the Department of Catholic School immediately.**

**The student who has made the threat will be kept in the school office under supervision until the police arrive. The parents/guardians of the student who has made the threat will be notified. Any adult or student who has been identified as the potential victim, or mentioned in writing as a potential victim, will be notified immediately.**

**The student who has made the threat will be suspended until the investigation by the police and school has been completed.**

**The decision to readmit a student who has made a threat will be made by the principal and pastor on a case-by-case basis.**

**Practical jokes or offhand comments of a threatening nature will be taken seriously and will be investigated. The police may be notified and these actions may result in suspension or removal of a student from school.**

## SCHOOL SEARCHES

Students' legitimate expectations of privacy in their person and in the personal effects they bring to school must be balanced against the obligation of the school to maintain discipline and to provide a safe environment for the school community. Accordingly, school officials may conduct a search of the student's person and personal effects based on a **reasonable suspicion** that the search will disclose evidence that the student is violating or has violated the law or a school rule.

School officials do not need a warrant or a parent's permission to conduct a search of the student and/or the school's or a student's personal property, as long as they have a reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule is being or has been violated. Whenever a school principal conducts a search of a student's person or personal effects, an adult witness should be present.

Students do not own their lockers, cubbies or other school property. Lockers, and/or storage cubbies, are made available to the student by the school. The student does have some expectation of privacy in his/her locker from other students. However, a student may not exclude school officials if the school official has a reasonable suspicion that a law or school rule has been violated.

A student has a greater expectation of privacy concerning his/her backpack, purse, clothing and other personal effects. A school official who finds it necessary to conduct a search of a student's backpack, purse, clothing or personal effects, must have a reasonable suspicion that the student is violating or has violated a law or school rule. The student's parents should be notified of any such search.

An alert from trained and certified detector dog is sufficient to allow the school official to have a reasonable suspicion and to conduct a warrant-less search of the student's locker, car or his/her personal property and effects. In addition to this policy on searches by the school, every student is subject to the Archdiocesan and school use and privacy policies concerning cell phones and other electronic devices, whether the devices belong to the school or to the student.

If a student refuses to cooperate in a reasonable search of the school or student property (including electronic devices), the student's parents and/or the police may be called for assistance or referral.

In the event that any items belonging to a student are confiscated, the principal should document that fact and, when possible, take a photograph of the place where the confiscated object was found and of the object itself. It is also recommended that the school obtain a signature from the student acknowledging that the item was in his or her possession at the time it was found.

## **PARENT/STUDENT COMPLAINT REVIEW PROCESS**

Concern for the dignity and rights of each person are intrinsic to the Church's mission as a true witness to the spirit of the Gospel. Circumstances may give rise to conflicts among students, parents and school staff. All parties are encouraged to use every available means to resolve these conflicts when they occur. However, if the involved parties are unable to resolve their conflicts, families may use the Parent/Student Complaint Review Process for additional assistance. All those participating in the Complaint Review Process are responsible to strive toward reconciliation and act in good faith. Legal representation is not permitted during the Complaint Review Process. Any person filing a complaint is to be free from restraint, coercion, discrimination, or reprisal in any form.

### **SCHOOL LEVEL**

The person bringing the complaint is encouraged to try to resolve the complaint by discussing it with the persons directly involved. If resolution is not achieved, the complaint should be discussed with the principal (or the pastor, if the principal is the subject of the complaint). For elementary schools, if the principal is unable to resolve the conflict, the principal will bring the pastor into the process as appropriate. After reviewing the facts and facilitating discussion of the problem the principal will respond to the person bringing the complaint.

### **Department of Catholic Schools Level**

If the complaint is not resolved at the school or parish level, the complaint may be submitted in writing to the supervisor at the Department of Catholic Schools, outlining the concerns and reviewing the local process.

The supervisor will review the complaint (with such consultation as may be appropriate) in a timely fashion and will endeavor to mediate and resolve the matter. However, if no agreement can be reached, the supervisor will make a final determination concerning the resolution of the complaint, based on the application of Archdiocesan and school policies and/or regulations, and communicate that determination, which will be final and binding, in writing to all parties.

## **PERSONAL ITEMS AND ELECTRONICS**

Toys, games and other personal belongings such as money (in excess of \$5) do not belong at school. During school hours (from 7:25 a.m. until 3:15 p.m.) communication devices (cell phones/etc.) must be turned off and stowed away. Failure to do so will result in confiscation and a call home. iPods and other electronic games should be left at home, unless specifically approved by the classroom teacher. If unauthorized devices are found in use during the school day, they will be confiscated.

Communication from the school, meant for the parent/guardian of a student, is not to be forwarded to anyone, under any circumstances, without the permission of the sender.

Details of the Archdiocesan Electronics Communication Policy, including access, ownership and consequences of system, device and materials use are fully supported by SMS and detailed in the following pages.

## ARCHDIOCESAN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

### 1) **Systems, Devices and Materials**

- ❖ **Electronic communication systems** include, but are not limited to, electronic mail, voice mail, facsimile machines, stand-alone or networked computers, intranets, the Internet/World Wide Web and any other communications systems that may be created in the future.
- ❖ **Electronic communications devices** include, but are not limited to, regular and mobile telephones, computers, laptops, electronic notebooks, audio and video equipment, flash drives, memory sticks, iPods, MP3 players, Blackberries, and other wireless equipment.
- ❖ **Electronic communications materials** include, but are not limited to, DVDs, CDs, laser discs, audio and video-tape, audio and visual recordings, films, microfiche, audio and visual broadcasts, computer operating systems, software programs, electronically stored data and text files, computer applications, e-mails, text messages, instant messages, and all other downloaded, uploaded, retrieved, opened, saved, forwarded, or otherwise accessed or stored content.

### 2) **Electronic Communications Systems, Devices and Materials and Users Covered**

- ❖ All electronic communications systems, devices and materials whether in a parish, school, or archdiocesan department or office;
- ❖ All electronic communications devices and materials taken from parish, school or archdiocesan office for use at home or on the road;
- ❖ All personal devices and materials brought from home and used on parish, school or archdiocesan premises during regular business hours;
- ❖ All personal devices and materials, regardless of location, that are used in such a manner that the parish, school or archdiocese may be implicated in their use.
- ❖ All users of electronic communications systems, devices and materials, including, but not limited to, students, employees, staff, contractors, volunteers, clergy and religious, and their families.

### 3) **Ownership and Control of Communications**

- ❖ All systems, devices and materials located in a parish, a school or an archdiocesan office, and all work performed on them, are property of the parish, school or archdiocese. These systems, devices and materials are to be used primarily to conduct official parish, school or archdiocesan business, not personal business.
- ❖ With permission from the pastor, principal or other person in charge, individuals may use systems, devices and materials, including access to the Internet, for personal business and web exploration outside regular business hours or during breaks. All users are expected to conform to appropriate content management and web surfing guidelines, whether during or outside regular

business hours.

- ❖ Parish, school and archdiocesan systems, devices and materials are not private and security cannot be guaranteed. Passwords and user IDs are designed to protect confidential information, not to provide users with personal privacy. User account passwords for systems not controlled by a centralized user directory or authentication system must be on record with the pastor, principal or other person in charge at the parish, school or archdiocesan department.
- ❖ Minors may only access the Internet from devices with updated and functioning filters for prohibited content. All obscene materials, child pornography or materials that are otherwise harmful to minors or in violation of this electronic communications policy must be blocked. Before allowing minors to access the Internet, a responsible person must ensure that content filters are “ON.”
- ❖ Content filters for minors may NOT be disabled or turned “OFF” without obtaining prior permission from the archdiocesan Applied Technology Department or the person with equivalent authority at the parish or school.
- ❖ All files downloaded from the Internet, all computer disks received from outside sources, and all content uploaded from portable memory devices must be scanned with updated/current virus detection software. Immediately report any viruses, tampering or other system breaches to the person in charge at the parish, school or archdiocesan department.
- ❖ Parishes, schools and the archdiocese reserve the right to monitor, access, retrieve, read and disclose all content created, sent, received, or stored on parish, school or archdiocesan systems, devices and materials (including connections made and sites visited) to law enforcement officials or others, without prior notice.

#### 4) **Guidelines for E-mail correspondence and other electronic communications**

- ❖ All users of parish, school or archdiocesan communications systems and devices should use care in creating e-mail, text, instant or voice mail messages. Even when a message has been deleted, it may still exist on a backup system, be restored, be printed out, or may have been forwarded to someone else without its creator's knowledge. The contents of e-mail and text messages are the same as other written documentation and cannot be considered private or confidential.
- ❖ E-mail and other electronic communications are not necessarily secure.
- ❖ As with paper records, proper care should be taken in creating and retaining electronic records for future use, reference and disclosure, as applicable.
- ❖ Postings to "All Employees," "All Parents" "All Parishioners" and the like on intranets or the Internet or the World Wide Web **must be approved** by the pastor, principal or other person in charge at the parish, school or archdiocesan department before they are sent out.
- ❖ Use of personal electronic communications devices and materials during regular business hours

should be kept to a minimum and limited mainly to emergencies.

5) **Prohibited Practices:**

Users of parish, school or archdiocesan electronic communication systems, devices or materials **and** users of personal devices and materials on parish, school or archdiocesan premises, during normal business hours or under circumstances when the parish, school or archdiocese may become implicated in the use, may not:

- ❖ Violate any federal, state or local laws, regulations, rules of conduct, codes of ethics, safe environment or any educational rules.
- ❖ Post or distribute personal contact information about the user or others without permission or review by a responsible adult person, unless required by the user's job duties or assigned responsibilities. Personal contact information includes names or screen names; telephone numbers; work, home or school addresses; email addresses and web addresses (URLS) of social networking sites or blogs.
- ❖ Post or distribute communications or pictures which a reasonable person, according to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, would consider to be defamatory, offensive, harassing, disruptive, derogatory or bullying. This includes, but is not limited to, sexual comments or images, racial or ethnic slurs, or other comments or images that would offend someone on the basis of race, creed, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, age, political beliefs, mental or physical disability, or veteran status.
- ❖ Engage in improper fraternizing or socializing between adults and minors. Minors may not agree to meet someone they have met online without their parents' approval and the presence of a parent at any meeting.
- ❖ Engage in pirating or unauthorized distribution (such as "podcasting") of copyrighted materials, music or film; arrange for the purchase or sale of any drugs, alcohol, or regulated substances and goods; or participate in Internet gambling.
- ❖ Post chain letters or engage in "spamming" (sending annoying, unnecessary or unsolicited commercial messages); repost a message that was sent privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
- ❖ Record any telephone or other conversation without the express permission of the other participants to the conversation except where allowed by law.
- ❖ Use electronic communications devices for designing, developing, distributing or storing any works of programming or software unless explicitly required by the duties of the job or assignment;
- ❖ Upload, download, view or otherwise transmit copyrighted, trademarked, patented, or indecent

material, trade secrets, or other confidential, private, or proprietary information or materials to which the user does not have access rights. Regarding copyrighted materials, certain exceptions are given for educational and liturgical purposes. If in doubt, consult the pastor, principal or other person in charge.

- ❖ Damage, alter, disrupt, or gain unauthorized access to computers or other systems; e.g. use others' passwords, trespass on others' folders, work or files.
- ❖ Give unauthorized persons access to parish, school or archdiocesan systems, provide access to confidential information, or otherwise jeopardize the security of the electronic communications systems (e.g. by unauthorized use or disclosure of passwords).
- ❖ Transmit confidential, proprietary, or sensitive information unless the transmission falls within the scope of the user's job duties or assignment by a responsible person.
- ❖ Introduce a virus, attempt to breach system security or tamper with a system.
- ❖ Alter, without authorization, a start up screen or the desktop, or install applications that will subvert these functions.
- ❖ Allow any minor to access the Internet on school communications devices before a responsible adult has checked to insure that active filtering of prohibited materials is enabled.
- ❖ Use electronic communications devices or systems to transmit any radio frequency signal that is not permitted and/or licensed by the Federal Communication Commission ("FCC") or that would violate FCC rules or policies.

## **6. Consequences of violations of electronic communications policy**

- ❖ Violations of this policy, including breaches of confidentiality or security, may result in suspension of electronic communication privileges, confiscation of any electronic communication device or materials, and disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, removal from parish or school activities, or other appropriate disciplinary action.



## THE SMS ADVISORY BOARD

The Saint Mark School Advisory Board is a consultative board that meets at the behest of the Pastor and Principal at least bi-monthly throughout the year to provide advice and counsel specifically in the review of the vision and mission of the school, strategic planning, policy formulation in areas determined by the Pastor and Principal, financial planning/management, institutional advancement, fundraising and development, communication, and mission review and enhancement. The advisory board consists of parent and (non-parent) community volunteers selected by the Pastor and Principal, working to lend their unique expertise and advice. Members serve three-year terms and are governed as a consultative body by the *Guidelines for Catholic School Governance* established by the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The Advisory Board has no authority for formulating policies separate from the Pastor and Principal. The board does not have responsibility for determining the amount of parish funds designated for the support of the school and has no responsibility with regard to school curriculum, staff, personnel or students. The president of the Saint Mark Parent Action Committee (PAC) is an invited member of the SMS Advisory Board, by virtue of the PAC's essential service to the fundraising and spirit programs for the school. Minutes are regularly kept and published to the school's website.

## SMS BOARD MEETINGS

The SMS Advisory Board meets at least bi-monthly on a regular day and time to be announced at the start of each school year and published in newsletters and mailings. Parents/guardians and other interested parties are encouraged to attend scheduled open sessions of the Board, and may speak to a particular issue if prior arrangements have been made. The following guidelines have been established to promote open communication while protecting privacy and ensuring order at Board meetings:

- ❖ Matters involving individual students and personnel will be discussed in closed session.
- ❖ Individuals who wish to address the Board in either open or closed session must make arrangements in advance with either the President or other officer of the Board.
- ❖ The Board President will welcome opportunities for comments by observers during designated open sessions.

## SMS PARENT ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC)

*Every* parent of SMS is a member of this essential committee! PAC is dedicated to facilitating so many of the fundraising and spirit-filled events that sustain and define Saint Mark School! **Room Parents** help to coordinate the volunteer and service activities at the classroom level to facilitate such events as our annual Halloween Parade, the Lion Olympics (a day of games, competitions, team- and spirit-building), hospitality, Grandparents' Mass, Mission Night, socials, and more!

SMS's PAC volunteers also manage the Auction as the main fundraising endeavor of the School Year. As with other non-profit schools, tuition alone cannot fully cover the cost of expenses at SMS. To help meet the actual cost of educating your child, we rely on a variety of fundraising activities for operating, capital and extraordinary expenses, and for special acquisitions that will enhance the children's educational experiences at SMS. Our annual auction and The Annual Fund are the only two major fundraising endeavors and are important to the operations of the school. Therefore, the school expects your full support in assuring the continued success of all our other fundraising efforts!

PAC also coordinates many of our volunteer services to meet the daily needs of the school and its families and

children, including support for the lunch service, carpool/traffic management, office volunteers and uniform recycling.

### **LIBRARY COMMITTEE**

Our Library Committee volunteers provide supervision of the children and manage the book borrowing system on a regular basis, enabling the children to enjoy the library collection - fiction, non-fiction and reference materials we have available in our library! Parents are encouraged to volunteer and support this program in any way possible.

### **OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE**

There are abundant opportunities to serve SMS and the Saint Mark community! In addition to the services mentioned above, coaching, Donut Ministry at Sunday masses, Religious Education support, and many more functions depend on the special gifts and talents of volunteers! Contact your child's **Room Parent** and plan on attending the **monthly PAC meetings** to find out how you can help! Sign up through *Sign-Up Genius* or the other methods provided on a regular basis.

### **DONATIONS AND GIFTS**

Because SMS is a non-profit organization, your gifts of money and materials are tax deductible and greatly appreciated! An appropriate receipt for charitable contributions will be provided for tax purposes. Consult your tax advisor for details about donations to nonprofit organizations.

\* \* \*

Archdiocesan directives for the implementation and function of advisory and fund-raising organizations may be found on the following pages.

### **ARCHDIOCESAN GUIDELINES FOR CONSULTATIVE SCHOOL BOARDS AND PARENT ORGANIZATIONS**

It is expected that each Catholic elementary school will establish a Parent Teacher Organization and a Consultative School Board. Both groups exist to support the school and are critical to the school's viability, but they have very different functions.

#### **PARENT ORGANIZATIONS - PAC**

The main functions of the Parent Organization at SMS (PAC) are to raise funds for the school's current operational expenses, to promote parental support for the school program, to build community, and to increase mutual understanding between school and parents. The membership of the parent teacher organization shall include the pastor, the principal, the parents or legal guardians, and the faculty of the school.

#### **CONSULTATIVE SCHOOL BOARDS**

The general responsibilities of the Consultative School Board are in the following areas: strategic planning; policy development; resource development; institutional advancement; advice and counsel with regard to financial planning, management and reporting; marketing of the school and evaluation of the board's goals and activities.

The membership of the Consultative School Board should include the pastor, principal, parents (no more than one-third of the total membership), alumni parents, parishioners, members of the civic and local business community, and area educators. Under Canon Law and Archdiocesan guidelines, the members advise the

administrative team (pastor and principal) and cannot make decisions binding for the parish education program without the approval of the administrative team (A Primer on Educational Governance in the Catholic Church, the CACE/NABE Governance Task Force, NCEA, 1998).

## FINANCIAL

### TUITION AND FEES

Our tuition and fee schedule is updated annually and available with each application/re-registration packet. Sibling and in-parish tuition fee structures are also included. Each student must be registered in the **FACTS** tuition management system used by SMS or parents may pay in full by June 1 of the summer before the school year for which tuition is being paid..

Your cooperation in making prompt payments will help to assure financial stability for SMS. In fairness to all, the following policies are in effect:

- ❖ Payment of all past-due balances is required at the time of re-registration.
- ❖ A 5% late charge for overdue payment(s) will be levied. (\$30.00 fee for NSF checks.)
- ❖ Reports, diplomas, activities, awards, and access to Internet grade links may be withheld from students/parents whose accounts are 60 days in arrears.
- ❖ Students whose trimester tuition remains unpaid are subject to dismissal.
- ❖ Unpaid balances must be reconciled or subject to an approved payment plan prior to entry to a new school year.

### TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition assistance is available to qualified applicants. Families interested in applying for financial assistance can do so by applying through the FACTS Tuition Management System financial aid portal. Some families may also qualify for CEF (Catholic Education Foundation) funding and should inquire in the school office in this regard. Families who apply for CEF will also be required to apply via FACTS. Consideration of financial need will be reviewed using the documentation provided for CEF applications and for FACTS. To apply for tuition assistance, submit the CEF application in March. If you have questions, consult the school office. Applicants will be informed in May in regards to the status and amount of their aid package.

### TUITION REFUNDS

Families withdrawing students prior to the first day of school will not be refunded tuition collected for the new school year up to that point. In addition, as the deposit is non-refundable, that will not be returned either. However, with 30 days' notice, the tuition refund will be prorated for each 1/10 of the school year remaining if tuition has been paid in advance. Registration deposits will not be refunded.

SMS supports and practices the Archdiocesan standards for *Privacy and Access to Records* noted below.

## ARCHDIOCESAN PRIVACY AND ACCESS TO RECORDS AND STANDARDS

Maintaining confidentiality is the legal, ethical and professional responsibility of every member of the school community, including students, parents/guardians, teachers, aides, and all other employees. Every member of the school community must respect the privacy of all students, families, employees, the principal and the pastor.

### PUPIL RECORDS

“Pupil records” means any record related to a student that is maintained by a school or one of its employees. It includes health records. It does not include “directory information” or a school employee's informal notes, if the notes remain in the sole possession of the maker and are not made available to others, except to a substitute.

Only the principal, as custodian of the records, authorizes the release of pupil records. Only teachers or administrators charged with pupil oversight have the right to view or use pupil records. A teacher's aide may view or use pupil records only with direct teacher supervision. Pupil records may be released by judicial order such as a subpoena or a search warrant. In specific cases, such as suspicion of kidnapping, police officers may be given access to records.

Parents and legal guardians of minors have the absolute right to access their child's pupil records in accordance with the school's reasonable procedures for providing such access. Parents or legal guardians may grant any specified person written consent to access specifically identified pupil records. In cases of legal separation and/or divorce, California state law gives the custodial parent and a non-custodial parent with visitation rights, the right to access and examine pupil records. However, only the custodial parent may consent to the release of records and has the right to challenge the content of the records and to write responses to information regarding disciplinary action. A non-custodial parent without visitation rights has no right of access to records of any kind.

### DIRECTORY INFORMATION

"Directory information" means one or more of the following items: pupil's name, address, telephone number and parent work contact, email, birth date, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, awards received, and the most recent high school matriculation.

SMS, like other schools in the archdiocese, makes directory and yearbook information available for easier communication among students and parents. Room parents may also organize per grade contact lists, as needed. All-school directory information, including parent contact information, for the purposes of organizing school functions, will be published annually. The school will, to the extent possible, minimize access to student telephone numbers or personal email addresses, unless the parents or legal guardians consent to broader access. To the extent possible, users should try to minimize access to or distribution of student telephone numbers or personal email addresses, unless the parents or legal guardians consent to broader access.

Room parent rosters, class lists, telephone numbers, email address lists or any other personal information about families and students are considered confidential and may be used only for the purposes specified. **In no cases should commercial enterprises be given access to Directory Information.**

### VERBAL/WRITTEN CONFIDENCES

Confidential information may be provided by students or parents/guardians to school employees in many ways. Students may confide in staff verbally, in writing, such as a note or a writing/journal assignment. All school employees must respect the verbal or written confidences of adults and students, except in cases where the health or safety of the student or others is involved. If the confidence received relates to a health or safety issue,

the pastor, principal or other person in charge or appropriate authorities must be notified promptly, keeping in mind the rights of privacy that apply. Archdiocesan policy on reporting suspected abuse of children or vulnerable adults must be followed when applicable.

## **TRANSFER OF RECORDS**

### **STUDENT TRANSFERS AND GRADUATION**

Whenever a pupil transfers from one school to another, a copy of the Cumulative Student Report and the original Health Record shall be transferred by the former school upon a request from the school where the pupil intends to enroll. The original Cumulative Student Report will remain at the school.

A record of the transfer, the reason for the transfer, and the name of the school to which the student is transferring or entering after graduation should be entered on the original copy of the Cumulative Student Report and in the Student Attendance Register.

Official transcripts are not given to students or parents.

### **DAMAGED OR LOANED PROPERTY**

Under California law, a private school cannot refuse to provide student records to a requesting school because of any charges, including tuition or fees that are owed by the student or parent. However, the school may withhold from parents/guardians the grades, diploma, or transcripts of a pupil pending payment of certain amounts for damaged property, or the return of loaned property, in accordance with school policy.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### STUDENT AND PARENT PLEDGE

Your completion of the SMS Application for Admission or Re-Enrollment form is an acknowledgment of support for our mission, vision and methods.

\* \* \*

### SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL'S RIGHT TO AMEND THIS HANDBOOK

Saint Mark School's Principal retains the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be given notification if changes are made. Changes may be made during the school year as the need arises and parents will be informed of these changes in a timely fashion.

# APPENDICES

[APPENDIX : VIRTUS PARENT HANDBOOK \(ADOBE FILE\)](#)

[APPENDIX: IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS \(ADOBE FILE\)](#)



## APPENDIX: CONTRACT FOR APPROPRIATE INTERNET USE BY MINORS

The Internet is a place where I go to learn, meet friends and play games. I know that through the Internet I can reach all sorts of people all over the world who are of good will and who, like me, sign on to the Internet to share ideas, feelings and what we've discovered about ourselves and the world around us. It's a place where I can be myself or sometimes pretend to be someone else. I can have deep discussions or let my imagination roam. I can be creative and do serious work. But I also know that the Internet can be a place where I can get lost, waste time and sometimes say or do things that I shouldn't. It's also a place where I need to be careful about people who could harm me.

Because I want to be the best person I can be and live my life as a friend of Jesus, I promise to abide by the following rules:

- ❖ If I find a website where I see hate, racism, pornography or violence of any kind, I will leave it immediately.
- ❖ I will not give my personal information in communications or on websites on-line to people I have not met in person. This includes my name, address, email address, telephone number, credit card numbers or school or parish location.
- ❖ I will never give personal information on-line about anyone else without that person's permission
- ❖ I will not buy anything on-line without my parents' permission.
- ❖ I will not download music or videos or games that must be paid for.
- ❖ I will always use a nickname in Internet communications when I communicate with people I don't know personally.
- ❖ I will practice good manners and be polite to other people when I communicate with them on the Internet. I will say nothing about anyone else that I wouldn't want someone to say about me.
- ❖ If I receive a message that bothers me, I will log off immediately and tell a responsible adult. I will not respond to the message.
- ❖ I will not arrange to meet a friend I have met on the Internet unless one of my parents has been informed and goes along with me to meet that person.
- ❖ I will not impersonate others.
- ❖ I will not bully, lie, or invite improper relationships and I will not encourage others to do so.
- ❖ I understand that if I violate any of these rules, I may be disciplined by:
- ❖ Losing use of the school or parish network, computers and software, including Internet access. I will then be expected to complete my work on a non-networked, stand-alone computer system.
- ❖ Being suspended or dismissed by the school or, as applicable, the parish activity in which I am participating when the violation occurs. Depending on what I did, my parents and I may also be subject to legal action by the school or parish or by civil authorities or other people involved.
- ❖ I have read this Contract, understand it, and I agree to abide by what it says.

Name of Student/Youth Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student/Youth Participant \_\_\_\_\_

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

As the parent of \_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree with the contents of this Contract, and I accept full responsibility for supervising my child when my child's use of the Internet is not in a school or parish setting.

Name of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

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



## APPENDIX: SMS DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM CODE

### DRESS CODE

At school, being “in uniform” means more than simply wearing the designated SMS clothing and shoes. Emphasis is placed upon neatness, cleanliness, appropriateness and comfort for work at school. Clothing should be sized right to fit, without holes, neither faded nor frayed, nor worn inside out.

Saint Mark students are expected to adhere to the uniform and grooming code at all times. Notes must be submitted to explain exceptions. Fads, and other current philosophical statements made through clothing, jewelry, hairstyles etc. are not allowed at SMS.

The SMS uniform is required on all regular school days. It includes the uniform clothing provided by *Land's End Uniforms*.

- ❖ Casual uniforms (including uniform polo shirts and no ties) on regular school days
- ❖ PE uniforms on scheduled PE days
- ❖ Dress uniform (SMS-logo shirts/ties/sweaters) for Friday Mass and other special designated events.

### HAIR, NAILS, AND JEWELRY

All hair must be clean, neatly styled and secured in such a manner that it will not fall in the eyes and face. Make-up and colored nail polish may not be worn. Jewelry, if worn, must be simple and not excessive in amount.

All boys must have a boy's regular haircut, and present a clean-cut and neat appearance. Hair must be above the collar in the back and above the top of the ear. Hair must be out of the eyes and clean. Boys are not to wear earrings or body piercing ornamentation at any time. The administration of SMS reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry, and to restrict anything that is deemed to be distracting or inappropriate.

Girls may only wear stud earrings, one in each ear lobe. All jewelry must blend with the uniform and be appropriate for school. Body piercing ornamentation other than studs in single-pierced ear lobes is not allowed. Skirt length may not be shorter than two inches above the knee. The administration of SMS reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry and to restrict anything that is deemed to be distracting or inappropriate.

## UNIFORM CODE

Students are to wear only *Land's End* uniform items and approved uniform shoes - all black, all navy, and/or all white. Some white (maximum 20%) can be on navy and black shoes. Some black or navy on white shoes. No other colors are allowed.

During this transition period, students are allowed to wear the Norman's uniform items except on dress uniform days until spring, 2018.

Similar clothing items from other manufactures MAY NOT be worn.

Please be sure to print your child's name on all pieces of clothing!

### Boys

- ❖ Land's End uniform items only
- ❖ Navy twill pants (**Must be the correct size and may not be baggy**)
- ❖ Solid black, brown or navy belts must be worn with pants
- ❖ Navy twill walking shorts
- ❖ White short sleeve oxford shirt with logo (button down front, pointed collar)
- ❖ Polo short/long sleeve shirt with logo (optional)
- ❖ Grades 6-8 are allowed to wear a gray polo as well provided by Land's End Uniforms.
- ❖ Navy pullover vest, pullover or cardigan sweater with logo or SMS fleece
- ❖ Striped burgundy and navy tie (dress uniform, only)
- ❖ Solid colored white, blue or black socks must be worn, white preferred with shorts
- ❖ A belt must be worn at all times - brown, black or dark blue solid in color
- ❖ Crew style socks are required, no ankle socks

All boys must have a boy's regular haircut, and present a clean-cut and neat appearance. Hair must be above the collar in the back and above the top of the ear. Hair must be out of the eyes and clean. Boys are not to wear earrings or body piercing ornamentation at any time. The administration of SMS reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry, and to restrict any manifestation thereof deemed to be distracting or inappropriate.

### GIRLS

- ❖ Land's End Uniforms Only
- ❖ Plaid jumper provided by Land's End (Gr.TK-4)
- ❖ White Peter Pan knit top with collar and with logo (Gr. TK-4)

- ❖ Navy cross tie for jumper (Gr. TK-4)
- ❖ Navy cardigan sweater, navy vest with logo or SMS fleece (Gr. TK\_4)
- ❖ Navy blue skort, navy skirt (Gr. TK - 8) (optional)
- ❖ Polo short/long sleeve shirt with logo (optional TK-8)
- ❖ Gray fitted polo shirt for grades 6-8
- ❖ Plaid skirt (Gr. 5-8)
- ❖ White short sleeve oxford shirt with logo (button down front, pointed collar) (Gr. 5-8)
- ❖ Navy tie (clip on or regular) (Gr. 5-8)
- ❖ Navy twill pants (optional)
- ❖ Navy twill walking shorts (optional)
- ❖ White knee or mid-calf-length socks, that cover the ankle and are mid-calf length or longer, white tights navy tights. Socks must be crew style or longer. No ankle socks.

All hair must be clean, neatly styled and secured in such a manner that it will not fall in the eyes and face. Make-up and colored nail polish may not be worn. Jewelry, if worn, must be simple and not excessive in amount. **Girls may only wear stud earrings, one in each ear lobe.** All jewelry must blend with the uniform and be appropriate for school. Body piercing ornamentation other than studs in single-pierced ear lobes is not allowed. Skirt length may not be shorter than two inches above the knee. The administration of SMS reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing, hair cut, hair style and jewelry, and to restrict any manifestation thereof deemed to be distracting or inappropriate.

## **P.E. UNIFORM**

### **BOYS AND GIRLS**

- ❖ Land's End P.E. clothing only (Norman's allowed until spring, 2018)
- ❖ May only be worn at P.E.
- ❖ Gray crewneck T-shirt with logo
- ❖ Navy P.E. shorts with logo
- ❖ Navy sweat pant with logo (optional)
- ❖ Navy sweatshirt with logo (optional)
- ❖ Sweatshirts **MAY NOT** be worn at any other time.

### **SHOES**

- ❖ All Black Athletic Shoes
- ❖ All White Athletic Shoes
- ❖ All Navy Athletic Shoes

- ❖ Some white is allowed (maximum 20% of shoe) on navy, black shoes. Some navy or black on white shoes. No other colors allowed!
- ❖ It is up to the school's discretion to determine if a type of shoe is appropriate for school. For example, ballet flat-type shoes are not appropriate. They do not provide enough support and can be unsafe on the yard.
- ❖ As of January, 2018, high top Converse-type shoes will not be allowed. They do not provide enough support and can lead to student injuries.

### SWEATSHIRTS

- ❖ School jackets/sweatshirts with or without the logo **MAY NOT BE WORN IN THE CLASSROOM.**  
**8<sup>th</sup> GRADE DESIGNED SENIOR SWEATSHIRTS ARE ALLOWED.**
- ❖ **SMS FLEECES ARE ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM but are rarely needed.**

### FULL DRESS UNIFORM POLICY

FULL DRESS UNIFORMS are required on school days when the students participate in:

- ❖ Mass (most Fridays)
- ❖ Formal Assemblies
- ❖ Picture Days (to be announced)
- ❖ Other Designated Activities (subject to notification)

### REQUIREMENTS:

#### BOYS

- ❖ Navy twill pants
- ❖ Solid black, brown or navy belts must be worn at all times
- ❖ White oxford short sleeve shirt with logo (button down front, pointed collar)
- ❖ Striped burgundy and navy tie
- ❖ Navy V-neck vest, pullover or cardigan with logo
- ❖ Socks and shoes as specified

#### K -- 4 GIRLS

- ❖ Plaid jumper provided by *Land's End*
- ❖ White peter pan knit top with logo
- ❖ Navy cross tie
- ❖ Navy cardigan sweater with logo

- ❖ Socks and shoes as specified

### 5 -- 8 GIRLS

- ❖ Plaid skirt provided by *Land's End*
- ❖ White oxford short sleeve shirt with logo (button down front, pointed collar)
- ❖ Navy blue tie
- ❖ Navy cardigan, vest or pullover sweater with logo
- ❖ Socks and shoes as specified

### REMINDER:

- ❖ Polo shirts, P.E. uniforms, skorts, 8<sup>th</sup> grade sweatshirts, fleeces, etc. **may not** be worn on a Full Dress Uniform Day.

**ONLY ALL BLACK, NAVY OR ALL WHITE ATHLETIC SHOES MAY BE WORN. SOME WHITE MAY BE ON BLACK, NAVY, SOME BLACK OR NAVY ON WHITE SHOES. NO OTHER COLORS ALLOWED!**

**8TH GRADE SWEATSHIRTS ARE ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM ON CASUAL DRESS DAYS, ONCE THEY HAVE BEEN PURCHASED.**

**NOTE: STUDENT COUNCIL IS ALLOWED TO WEAR THEIR SPECIFIED POLO SHIRT AND SWEATSHIRT AS DESIGNATED AND OUTLINED BY THE STUCO MODERATORS!**

## APPENDIX: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

SMS's commitment to the children extends at all times to their health, well-being and safety. While we cannot foresee specific potential emergency situations, we are dedicated to personal preparedness and the maintenance of reasonable supplies to meet as many needs as possible. These include:

- ❖ Continued "locked-door" policy.
- ❖ Regularly scheduled fire, lock-down and earthquake drills.
- ❖ Review of emergency procedures at staff meetings.
- ❖ Maintenance of reserve bottled water supplies and nutrition to the extent of limited space in the facility.
- ❖ Maintenance of basic first-aid supplies to the extent of limited space in the facility.
- ❖ Availability of cell phones for use in the event of loss of phone lines.
- ❖ Back-up battery packs, radios and flash lights for use in the event of power failures.
- ❖ Awareness of alternative sites for shelter, including our Parish Hall.
- ❖ Contact with the Venice Fire Department.

We want to assure our families that each classroom teacher is fully aware of his/her responsibility, first and foremost to his/her students, and that no student is left unattended.

Office staff has the responsibility to maintain emergency contact information for all children and to coordinate any communication or emergency responses if at all possible.

Above all, we incorporate prayer for God's protection of the school, its children, their families and the staff on a daily basis.



## APPENDIX: SAINT MARK SCHOOL EARTHQUAKE/DISASTER PROCEDURES

The following recommendations and procedures are designed to provide as much safety and calm during and after a major disaster as possible.

Please review these guidelines with your children. Be sure they understand the emergency procedures listed for school as well as your own plans in case of an earthquake or disaster while at home, in the car, etc.

Have a definite plan for reuniting your family after a disaster. If you are likely not to be available, who would be responsible for picking up your children? Decide where your child should go if a disaster should occur while he/she is on the way to or from school. Encourage your child to use the same route every day. Also, please remember (and remind your child) that the safest place for your child in an emergency during the school day is at school.

### SCHOOL PROCEDURES

- ❖ During an earthquake the children and/or the teacher will initiate the drop procedure. They will take cover under desks. If an earthquake occurs during a play period in the yard, the children will drop immediately and wait to be directed to move to the center of the playground away from the chain link fence and the building.
- ❖ As soon as possible children will be moved away from the windows and out from under light fixtures.
- ❖ The building will be evacuated following the advisory plans.
- ❖ The pupils will assemble in the main yard away from buildings and overhead wires. All gates will be closed and guarded.
- ❖ Teachers will render first aid and take roll.
- ❖ Faculty teams will report to Emergency Operations Center. The appropriate teams will be directed to check the building for total evacuation and for any utility disruption. Gas, water and electricity will be turned off, if necessary.
- ❖ Children will be warned against touching any wires or the chain link fence that might become electrified from fallen power lines.
- ❖ The Fire Department will be contacted as needed.
- ❖ The Emergency Team will monitor radio (portable or automobile) communications.

In a major earthquake students will stay under the protection of the school staff until a parent or other authorized person is available to take the child home. The name of the student and the time released will be recorded along with the signature of the family representative.

### PARENT PROCEDURES

- ❖ **Please do not phone school.** The phone lines must be kept free for emergency calls for doctors and emergency vehicles.
- ❖ Listen to the radio. We will be cooperating with the directives given for the public schools in our area.

- ❖ When you arrive to pick up your child/children please follow the directions of the school staff. Parents will:
  - Enter the yard in a calm manner through the opening in the yard behind the church.
  - Walk to the area where the children are waiting.
  - Meet one of the teachers on the Child Control Team, who will assist you.
  - Report to the check out station to sign-out your children. (It is essential that all children be checked out before leaving the school grounds.)
- ❖ Some parents may be asked to assist school personnel.
- ❖ No child will be allowed to leave with an adult who is not listed on the blue emergency information form.

## **APPENDIX: HARASSMENT**

Harassment and bullying are serious and actionable issues in every setting, and particularly contrary to the beliefs and mission of our Catholic school. Definitions, descriptions and consequences associated with harassment are detailed below.

### **VERBAL HARASSMENT**

Verbal harassment such as derogatory comments and jokes, or threatening words spoken to another person, student or teacher, will not be tolerated and may be cause for expulsion.

### **PHYSICAL HARASSMENT**

Unwanted physical touching, contact, assault, deliberately impeding or blocking movements, or any intimidating interference with normal work or movement will not be tolerated and may result in expulsion.

### **VISUAL HARASSMENT**

Visual harassment such as derogatory, demeaning or inflammatory posters, cartoons, written words, or drawing gestures will not be tolerated and may result in expulsion.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, request for sexual favors or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when any or all of the following occurs:

- ❖ Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic status or progress
- ❖ Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis of academic decisions affecting the individual.
- ❖ Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Specific examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Making unsolicited sexual advances and propositions.
- ❖ Using sexually degrading words to describe an individual or an individual's body.
- ❖ Displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures.
- ❖ Telling inappropriate or sexually related jokes.
- ❖ Making reprisals, threats of reprisals or implied threats of reprisals following a negative response to sexual advances.

Saint Mark School will:

- ❖ Implement this policy through regular meetings with all administrators, including the pastor in the case of a parish school, ensuring understanding and acceptance of the policy and its importance.
- ❖ Make all faculty, staff, students and parents aware of this policy and the commitment of the school toward

its strict enforcement.

- ❖ Remain watchful for conditions that create or may lead to a hostile or offensive school environment.
- ❖ Establish practices designed to create a school environment free from discrimination, intimidation, or harassment.

It is the student's responsibility to:

- ❖ Conduct himself/herself in a manner that contributes to a positive school environment.
- ❖ Avoid any activity that may be considered discriminatory, intimidating, bullying or harassing.
- ❖ Immediately inform anyone harassing him or her that the behavior is offensive and unwelcome.
- ❖ Report all incidents of discrimination or harassment to the Principal.
- ❖ If informed he or she is perceived as engaging in discriminatory, intimidating, harassing or unwelcome behavior, to discontinue that conduct immediately.

#### **COMPLAINT FILING AND INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES**

The following procedures must be followed for filing and investigating a harassment claim:

- ❖ The student may first choose to tell the individual causing the harassment that his/her conduct is offensive and must stop. If the objectionable behavior does not cease immediately, the student must report the harassment to the Principal, or to a teacher who will report it to the Principal, or to the Regional Supervisor if the Principal is the subject of the allegations. Additionally, in the case of a sexual harassment allegation the student is free to raise the issue with another, same sex administrator if he/she prefers to do so.
- ❖ The student alleging harassment will be asked to complete a formal, written complaint. The claim will be investigated thoroughly, involving only the necessary parties. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible.
- ❖ The investigation will include a meeting with the person alleged to have harassed, sharing with that person the nature of the allegations as well as the name of the person bringing the allegations. If appropriate, the alleged harasser will be suspended or placed on administrative leave during the course of the investigation.
- ❖ Once the facts of the case have been gathered, the Principal, in consultation with Regional Supervisor, and, in case of a parish school, with the Pastor, will decide what, if any, disciplinary action is warranted. The disciplinary action will relate to the nature, context, and seriousness of the harassment and can include all disciplinary actions up to and including immediate termination or expulsion.
- ❖ If the complaint is against a non-employee or non-student, such as a parent, parishioner, volunteer or vendor, the school will take steps, within its power, to investigate and eliminate the problem.

#### **ABUSE OF TEACHER OR ADMINISTRATOR**

The school philosophy supports the school and home as a unit working together for the good of every child. Archdiocesan policy reminds us that:

- ❖ Any parent, guardian, or other person who upbraids, insults, or abuses any teacher/administrator of the

school, in the presence or hearing of a pupil, is guilty of a misdemeanor.

- ❖ Any parent, guardian, or other person who insults or abuses any teacher/administrator in the presence of other school personnel or pupils and at a place which is on school premises or public sidewalks, streets, or other public ways adjacent to school premises or at some other place if the teacher is required to be at such place in connection with assigned school activities is guilty of a misdemeanor and is punishable by a fine. (Archdiocesan Handbook).

#### **RECOMMENDED TRANSFER OF CHILD**

Under normal circumstances, a pupil is not to be deprived of a Catholic education on grounds relating to the attitude or actions of parents/guardians. It is recognized, however, that a situation could arise in which the uncooperative or disruptive attitude of a parent/guardian might so diminish the effectiveness of the educational process that continued matriculation in the school may be impossible. Where parental/guardian interactions with the faculty, staff, students or administration are deemed inappropriate or detrimental to the work of the school, SMS reserves the right to invoke the regulations governing recommended transfer of the student (*Archdiocesan Handbook*).