

# **ST. MARIA GORETTI CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

**1200 SOUTH DAVIS DRIVE  
ARLINGTON, TEXAS 76013  
817-275-5081**



## **PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2010-2011**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint you with your parish school and to inform you of the regulations and requirements that will govern your child's life at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School. A good understanding of them will unite all of us – parents, teachers, students and administrators – in our efforts to help your child in his/her intellectual, physical, spiritual, civic, and religious growth.

Although it is impossible to put into writing every aspect of school life, this handbook will provide you with a general guide for many things. The administration reserves the right to amend this handbook. Parents will be notified of any changes that occur.

## **ST. MARIA GORETTI PARISH MISSION STATEMENT**

Through baptism in our Lord Jesus Christ and celebration of the Most Holy Eucharist, we, all the members of St. Maria Goretti Church, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, commit ourselves to:

Growing as a community of believers who affirm the glorious diversity of God's people,

Embracing stewardship as a way of life by sharing our time, talents, and treasures and

Spreading the good news by living, loving, sacrificing, and working together for the glory and honor of God.

St. Maria Goretti Mission Statement  
February 25, 1995

## **SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT**

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School is a community of believers with the purpose of providing a Catholic environment in which the gospel of Jesus Christ is taught, practiced and experienced.

We dedicate ourselves to educating children, encompassing their spiritual, academic, physical and social development.

## **SCHOOL GOALS**

In line with our mission statements, we pledge to:

- develop a spiritual life for the students through the celebration of liturgical prayer and the sacraments
- foster an awareness of our responsibilities to self and to the society in which we live
- provide the best education possible for students in a Christian environment
- “teach as Jesus did” as the Church encourages us to do.

## **ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS**

The student's parent or legal guardian has the right to inspect all of their student's records in the presence of the principal or her delegate. The school shall comply with requests to inspect student records according to established procedures. A minimum of one day's notice is required should a parent or guardian desire to review a student's file.

In cases of parent separation or divorce, the non-custodial parent shall have the same access rights to student records as the custodial parent unless restricted by an order of the court.

## **ACCREDITATION**

The school is fully accredited by the Texas Catholic Conference Education Department, one of the associations recognized by the Texas Education Agency for accrediting non-public schools in Texas. An enriched curriculum exceeds the minimum standards established by the state of Texas.

The school holds memberships in the National Catholic Education Association and in the Texas Independent School Consortium.

## **ADMISSIONS**

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. This school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, political beliefs, handicap, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policy, scholarship program, and athletic and other administered program.

No person shall be admitted as a student to St. Maria Goretti Catholic School unless that person and his/her parent subscribe to the school's philosophy and agree to abide by the educational policies and regulations of the school and the diocese.

No student shall be admitted to St. Maria Goretti Catholic School unless he has a reasonable hope of successfully completing the school's program.

Students shall not be denied admission to St. Maria Goretti Catholic School because of a handicap unless this handicap seriously impairs the student's ability to complete successfully the school's academic program, or unless the school cannot provide sufficient physical care for the handicapped child.

Admission will be denied to those children whose parents refuse to cooperate with school policies, regulations, programs or staff. Admission will also be denied to children whose parents seriously interfere in the matters of school administration or discipline as to reduce significantly the school's ability to serve the parents' own children or other children, in accordance with diocesan and local policies.

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

The following is established as a guideline for registering students for admission to St. Maria Goretti Catholic School:

1. Children who are currently enrolled at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School.
2. Children from families with children already registered in the school.
3. Children from families whose parents are registered, contributing members of the parish (6 month registration period required).
4. Catholic children from other parishes.
5. Non-Catholic children.

No student may be enrolled to avoid financial responsibility to another diocesan school. Students may not dual register at the time of registration with another school or the registration with St. Maria Goretti Catholic School becomes void. Non-Catholic parents and students must clearly understand that participation in Catholic religious instruction and school activities related to the Catholic character of the school is required.

## **ADMISSION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS**

Upon application for admission, all students in grades 1-8 may be requested to take the Stanford Achievement Test. If a student has taken a standardized test within the last year, that test along with the last year's report card will be evaluated and parents will be contacted by the principal regarding the outcome and school admittance. In grades 2-8, students may be required to submit a writing sample and to interview with the principal. The school reserves the right to request student withdrawal during the school year if: 1) inability or unwillingness to perform at the academic level required and/or 2) unwillingness to conform to school discipline policies. All new students are accepted on a probationary status for the first 9 weeks at which time academic progress and conduct grades will be evaluated.

## **ASBESTOS**

St. Maria Goretti School has asbestos found in floor tile in a few of the primary hall classrooms. The tile is located under carpet. The asbestos is contained and non-friable. The management plan for the school building is located in the office. Persons interested in reviewing the documentation may contact the principal for an appointment.

## **ATTENDANCE**

The state of Texas provides by law for compulsory attendance of all school-aged children to the age of 16. The responsibility for compliance with this law belongs to the parents, but the school is obliged to keep an accurate record of daily attendance.

If your child is not in attendance, please notify the office before 9:00 a.m. by calling 817-275-5081. Parents must provide the reason for the absence when calling the office to report the absence. Parents may leave a message on the school answering machine during non-school hours by calling 817-275-5081.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Your child may bring birthday treats to share with classmates. If treats are brought, a treat should be brought for every child in the class. This is to be distributed at lunchtime. Cookies are preferred because of ease of distribution. Invitations to birthday parties may **NOT** be passed out at school. Delivered floral arrangements, balloons, or arrangements for food will not be allowed. These items disrupt the day. If such items are delivered, a parent will be called to come to the school office to pick up the item at the end of the school day.

Teacher birthdays will not be celebrated during the school day.

## **BOOK FAIR**

Twice a year the school library will have a book fair. The library is self-sustaining and therefore depends on donations to increase and replace needed books. Books are also needed in classrooms. Parents who wish to donate a book may do so at one of the book fairs. Books are pre-selected and displayed so that the donor may choose one to his liking. A donor label is placed inside the book or books purchased to remain as a part of the school's permanent library collection.

## **BOOSTER CLUB**

The St. Maria Goretti Catholic School Booster Club is an organization with the purpose of fostering a greater interest, understanding, and cooperation among students, teachers, coaches, parents, and administration; therefore, creating a greater appreciation of the Catholic/Christian education by supporting all forms of school activities.

## **BOOSTER CLUB BY-LAWS**

Booster club by-laws are stored in the school office. Parents may request to view them. Allow the school office twenty-four hours to prepare a copy upon request.

## **CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION FOR CONCERN**

1. Contact the teacher regarding questions about instruction, discipline, materials, class work, and homework.
2. Contact the principal regarding questions about school procedures and the day to day operation of the school.
3. Contact the school advisory council concerning school advisory council policies, long range planning, and announced tuition schedules. The school advisory council does not become involved in the day-to-day administration of the school.

Never, under any circumstances, question the authority of a teacher when your child is present. The teacher will never question your authority as a parent.

Parents cannot expect the school to be effective in communicating Christian values if these values are not lived at home. Children lose respect for their school and the faculty when they hear

parents speak adversely or negatively about the school and the parish community. Gossip destroys trust and often only spreads lies. **St. Maria Goretti Catholic School families are expected to live as mature Christians and to shun gossip in all of its forms.**

Constructive criticism of the school is welcome when it is motivated by a sincere desire to improve the quality of the educational program and to equip the school to perform its task more effectively. Any misunderstanding that arises should be presented to the teacher first, when it pertains to his/her class and then to the principal.

## **CONFERENCES**

Parent-teacher conferences are held at the end of the first quarter (grades K-8). Pre-school conferences will also be scheduled by the teacher. Additional conferences may be scheduled by individual teachers or by the request of parents. Communication will be made with the parents when a serious problem arises. Parents may call the office to schedule a conference or they may e-mail the teacher directly. The teacher will return calls or e-mail by the next school day.

## **CURRICULUM**

The curriculum includes religion, math, reading, science, social studies, Texas history, civics, English, spelling, music, art, PE, Spanish, computer science, and library. **The school follows diocesan guidelines for time allotments in each subject as well as the skills to be mastered at each level.**

Placement of students for the next year: the administration and faculty reserve the right to make the final determination where a student is placed when promoted to the next grade level. We make every effort to take all factors into consideration when deciding class placement. The student is always our primary concern.

## **DIRECTORY**

A school directory is published at the beginning of the school year. It includes names of faculty, staff, and an alphabetical listing of students and parents.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Students at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School are expected to behave in a Christian manner. Certain behaviors are not acceptable for students on or off school property while participating in school activities.

The staff has adopted assertive discipline as outlined by Lee Cantor. Through assertive discipline the students are taught that they are responsible for their actions. For every action they choose, there is a positive or negative consequence.

If your child has chronic discipline problems, you may expect a phone call to home or your place of employment. We need your cooperation and suggestions in dealing with major problems.

There are two categories of negative behavior, serious and less serious. The less serious behaviors will be handled as outlined below. There will be specific school-wide, as well as, specific classroom expectations for the student.

Classroom expectations: each homeroom teacher will post up to 5 appropriate behaviors. The students are expected to follow these guidelines or accept the outlined consequences. Examples of classroom expectations are: follow directions the first time they are given, raise hand before asking a question, homework assignments are to be complete, and/or come prepared for class.

School wide expectations: as a staff the following expectations were chosen to benefit the smooth operation of the school. Students will:

1. Be in assigned appropriate areas (must have a hall pass to be out of class). No student is to be in his/her classroom or in the building before or after school, at recess, at lunchtime, unless given permission.
2. Use playground equipment appropriately.
3. Walk in halls.
4. Eat food only at specific time/place.
5. Use appropriate language.
6. Speak/respond to directives with respect.
7. Do not throw food in the lunchroom.
8. Never act in a manner that is perceived to be detrimental to a positive school environment. The student will be told the specific behavior that was perceived to be unacceptable.
9. Students are expected to behave in an appropriate manner at all extra curricular activities (i.e. school dances, games, etc.).
10. Students are also expected to use e-mail and the internet (i.e. My Space) in a manner that is both respectful and Christian. Behavior outside of school may never embarrass the reputation of the school or interfere with the education process.
11. Students are expected to behave in an appropriate manner at all times even when not at school so as not to embarrass the reputation of the school.

Teachers will communicate behavior consequences at grade level meetings and/or conferences. In addition, each individual grade level will establish positive consequences. Parents will be asked to sign an acknowledgment of the assertive discipline plan being used in their child's classroom.

Guidelines for serious offenses/breaking rules are as outlined below. When one of the following offenses occurs, the student may be required to notify his parents by phone to come to the school for a conference. In some cases, the student will not be allowed to return to class until a conference is held or arrangements for a conference have been made. The conference will be attended by the principal (or her/his designee), the teacher(s), parents, and student. At the conference, a written understanding will be signed by all present. The action taken is left to the discretion of the principal, depending on the nature and seriousness of the offense.

Possible action that might be taken includes:

1. Placed on probation.
2. Suspension – either in-school or out-of-school.
3. Expelled permanently (this would be only in an extreme case).

Behaviors that are subject to the above procedures might include;

1. Open and persistent defiance of authority.
2. Willful destruction or defacing of school property.
3. Stealing.
4. Fighting.
5. Disrespect of a serious nature.
6. Offensive language or gestures of a serious nature.
7. Throwing objects at passing or parked cars or bicycles.
8. Tampering with parked cars or bicycles.
9. Cheating.
10. Carrying a knife, matches, fireworks, or other items considered dangerous.
11. Any behavior which is harmful to the welfare and safety of other students.
12. Bringing tobacco or alcoholic products on school property or to school events.
13. Conduct unbecoming a Christian student.

A student who perceives that he has been treated unfairly is to contact the person who disciplined him/her on an individual basis the same day. This should be done in private, one-on-one conference.

### **DROP-OFF/PICK-UP PROCEDURES**

#### **DROP-OFF:**

Parents are asked to escort pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students to their classrooms. Parents are asked to park in front parking lot and enter the building using the front doors. Please do not park in the fire lane in front of the building. Emergency access to the campus is blocked when cars park in fire lanes. Kindergarten students will join the west parking lot drop-off during the second nine weeks of the school year.

1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students are dropped off on the west parking lot starting at 7:25 a.m. Please pull your car as far forward as possible and have students exit from right side of the vehicle. **Students should not be asked to walk across traffic from a parked car. All students should be dropped off in the car line.** Parents with students in grades 1-8 and a kindergartner will drop off the older student(s) first and then park in the front parking lot and walk the kindergartner to class. The kindergartner will join older siblings in west parking lot drop-off during the second nine weeks of the school year.

#### **PICK-UP:**

Pre-kindergarten: parents will pick-up students from the school front steps at 3:00 P.M.

Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students: KA and KB students who are the only student in carpool will be picked up from the front steps of the cafetorium. 1<sup>st</sup> grade students who are the only student in a carpool will also be picked up from the front steps of the cafetorium. All other students will be picked up on the west parking lot according to the number of students in the carpool. Single students in the carpool will be picked up in the first line immediately next to the sidewalk on the west side of the building. Three or more students in the carpool will be picked up in the next two car lines. Two students in the carpool will be picked up from the last two car lines. Teachers will be on duty to assist with the car-line loading and cars moving in a safe and efficient manner. Please pay special attention to those teachers assigned to this after school duty.

Dismissal begins with the 3:00 bell. Students not picked-up by 3:20 will be placed in SMEED. Parents are asked not to arrive on campus prior to 2:45 to allow for easy access to church administrative offices.

#### **RAINY DAY DROP-OFF PROCEDURES:**

Students must be dropped off in the back parking lot and will proceed to the cafetorium (with the exception of Pre-K and kindergarten except when kindergarten joins the morning drop-off during the second nine weeks.) Junior high doors will be left unlocked until 8:00 a.m. to allow easy access to the school.

**RAINY DAY PICK-UP:** All students will be picked up from classrooms.

### **FACULTY IN-SERVICES**

Faculty meetings and in-services are scheduled monthly. Classes dismiss at noon. Check the calendar for specific dates.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

An important part of a child's education is taking advantage of learning opportunities in the community through field trips. Transportation for field trips will be by bus. Students may not participate in a field trip unless the teacher has received a signed copy of the official field trip permission form. Field trips are privileges afforded to students. Students may be denied participation in a field trip should they fail to meet academic or behavior requirements.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

Students and teachers will leave the building and proceed to assigned area in response to fire signal. All staff, workers, and visitors are also required to leave the building. Strict silence must be observed during all fire drills. All must move quickly, but not run, to their assigned locations. All doors to the building will be closed once everyone is outside. Teachers will bring their class rolls to check that all are present.

Students will walk in single file silently back to classrooms once the return to class signal is given.

Fire drills take place once a month, but at a time when no one expects them. Students never know whether it is a real fire or a drill, so they must always conduct themselves as though the building was really on fire. Parents should discuss this with their children so that they will be impressed with the seriousness of the drills.

### **HEALTH RULES**

**NOTICE TO PARENTS:** The only medication allowed at school is for epileptics, asthmatics, diabetics, and hyperkinetics. Please come by the school office to pick-up forms and instructions

that must be followed before medication may be brought to school if your child has one of these health problems.

DO NOT send medicine for colds, coughs, headaches, etc. to school even though a doctor might prescribe it. This type of medicine is to be taken outside of school hours. Diocesan policy states:

**“Only necessary medication may be taken at school. Necessary medications are those needed for epileptics, asthmatics, diabetics, and hyperkinetics only.”**

Diocesan policy does not allow school personnel to dispense other medications. This is a very strict rule and must be followed.

Health rules to be followed at St. Maria Goretti School include:

1. Each student receives a school health form and emergency care form when entering St. Maria Goretti Catholic School. The parents are responsible for getting the forms accurately and completely filled in and returned to the school within 10 days of the student’s first day of attendance. See that immunizations are brought up to date and physical examinations are provided as required.
2. Parents of students who have been in school a year or more should send a doctor’s notice of any additional immunizations whenever they are given so that the child’s health record may be kept current.
3. Any other information pertaining to a child’s mental or physical condition (allergies, asthma, medications, etc.) must be included in his/her school health record.
4. At the school, hearing, vision and scoliosis (sixth grade) and other health tests are given according to state and diocesan regulations.
5. Each student’s height and weight are recorded on the health record annually.
6. Minor first aid will be given in school. In the event that major first aid is required, the school will try to contact first, one of the parents, then, the neighbor or relative recommended on the emergency care form. If none of these can be reached; the school administration will seek the emergency care needed, parents being liable for any expense incurred.
7. Parents must keep their child home if he/she:
  - (1) is unable to follow class routine;
  - (2) had fever the day before or during the night; students must be vomit and temperature free for 24 hours before returning to school;
  - (3) coughs excessively and/or might infect others with his/her cough or cold.
8. Dental and doctor appointments are to be scheduled for students after class hours. In the event that it is absolutely necessary to keep an appointment during the school day, parents must send a written request which the child presents to the teacher.

9. Contagious diseases should be reported to the school office immediately. Children will take home slips notifying parents if there is reason to believe they may have been exposed to a contagious disease from another child in any of their classes.
10. Ozone alert day: Orange level – asthmatics and students with inhalers will be kept indoors unless a parental release for outdoor activity is on file in the clinic.
11. For the good of your child and all the other children in the school, we adhere to the following regulations:
  - a. Students having a temperature of 99.6 or above will not be permitted to return to the classroom. The parents or neighbor or relative designated on the emergency care form must be available to pick up your student within 30 minutes of notification by school personnel of an injury or illness. Advance arrangements by the parents are necessary to comply with this regulation.
  - b. Students who have an elevation of temperature above 99.6 will be expected to remain at home until 24 hours after the temperature has returned to normal.
  - c. Students who have been vomiting during the night preceding a school day are expected to remain at home until 24 hours after the vomiting has ceased.

Absences may be reported to the school by phone or e-mail. To report an absence you may call 275-5081 or e-mail the secretary at [secretary@smgschool.org](mailto:secretary@smgschool.org).

### **HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION**

The purpose of the Home and School Association is to promote a spirit of cooperation and understanding between the parents and faculty. The association builds the community spirit of the school and raises funds to aid the school in providing a quality education to all students attending the school. Dues are collected each year to cover the directory, class parties, yearbook, and School News (monthly newsletter). Money from fundraisers is used to support programs that will enhance student education. The Home and School Association meeting is held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of the month.

### **HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION BY-LAWS**

A copy of Home and School Association by-laws is stored in the school office. The by-laws are reviewed yearly by the Home and School Association executive committee. Parents may view the by-laws at any time and the office will provide a copy upon request within twenty-four hours.

### **HOMEWORK**

Homework has an essential place in the educational process. Homework will be assigned:

- 1) to reinforce concepts and skills presented in class.
- 2) to foster the student's creativity and discipline through enrichment projects or research.
- 3) to train the student to work independently and to accept responsibility for completing a task.

The following are recommendations regarding the amount of time a student will spend on homework. It is understood that:

- 1) The time stated is an average amount of time and will vary per night and will vary with the individual.
- 2) If a student uses allotted class time wisely to begin assignments, the amount of homework time can be reduced.
- 3) If a student does not have specific assignments, the time should be used for review, long range assignments, or free reading.

It is recommended that a good study environment be provided: quiet place (no TV), good lighting, minimal distractions, adequate supplies, and a regularly scheduled study time. A parent should answer questions for the student, but should not do the homework for him/her.

Average daily homework time:

Primary grades	½ hour
Intermediate grades	1 hour
Junior high	2 hours

Students will not be allowed to make up assignments or tests that occurred during an unexcused absence from school.

### **HONOR ROLL**

Students in junior high (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> grades) are eligible for the school's honor roll program. The program recognizes those students who have demonstrated academic excellence in academics and conduct at the end of each grading period (quarter) of the school year. The honor roll will be posted in the junior high display case located near the Pre-kindergarten classroom. Honor roll will be determined by the following: High Honors 95.0-102.0 with an A in conduct and Honors 90.0-94.9 with a B in conduct. Students earning a C will only be eligible for Honors.

### **ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL**

Students are asked not to bring toys, video games, I-pods, CD players, headsets, or other items to school. The school cannot assume responsibility for items lost or stolen.

### **LIBRARY**

The school Library Media Center contains in excess of over 6,000 volumes in all subject areas pertinent to elementary education as well as easy books and reference materials. Computers are

also available for the most current reference material. Primary grades (K-3) also have self-contained classroom libraries for student enrichment.

Students in grades K-5 go to the library weekly as a scheduled class. During this time, students may select a book to check-out.

### **Loan Periods:**

Students in grades K-5 may check-out one book for one week. A book may be renewed one time on the due date for an additional week, after which time, the book must be returned so other students may check it out.

Junior high students will visit the library on a rotating basis as part of their literature class. Books will be checked-out for a 3-week loan period.

### **Fines:**

Students will receive a one-day grace period for overdue items before fines begin to accrue. Daily fines of 10 cents will be charged per item overdue. Fines will not accrue on weekends or holidays. The maximum fine for any overdue item will be limited to \$3.00. After the fine reaches this point, the item will be designated as “lost” and the student will be asked to pay the cost to replace the book. Replacement cost for any book will be the current market value plus shipping, handling and processing; but, not to exceed \$30.00 for any given item.

### **Overdue Items:**

A student’s borrowing privileges will be suspended until overdue items are returned. Overdue notices will be issued as a courtesy to students. However, non-receipt of a notice does not exempt a student from applicable fines. To avoid fines, students are expected to return items on or before the due date. If a student is absent on the day an item is due, the item will be due on the day the student returns to school.

Lost or damaged books must be replaced. Any book or portion thereof that is wet or has been wet cannot be used and must be paid for in full. Final report cards will not be sent, nor requests for transcripts honored if outstanding library fees exist.

The library will be closed two weeks before the end of the school year in order to check inventory. All items will be due at this time. Books that are not returned by the last day of school will be considered “lost” and fines will be assessed accordingly.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and found articles will be traced if at all possible. Items not claimed will be placed in the copy room. Those items not claimed will be given away at the semester break. To prevent your child’s clothes from becoming lost, please mark them with your child’s name.

## **LUNCH**

Lunch schedules are posted at the beginning of every year. Students are scheduled for lunch by levels: K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. Fast food (such as burgers, fries, and pizza) may not be brought to

school during lunch periods. We ask that students in grades K-2 refrain from drinking carbonated beverages at lunch. Milk and fruit juices are available for purchase on a daily basis.

A school catering company is contracted to provide a hot lunch program for our school students. The catering company will send program information to families via kid mail. A monthly lunch menu will be posted on school website.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

A student has 2 days for every day absent to complete missed work. Students will not be allowed to make-up tests or assignments that occurred during an unexcused absence from school.

Teachers will help students make up tests and other work after a child has been absent due to illness or family emergency.

When a student is absent the parent may request the student's work by:

1. Calling the office secretary before 9:00 A.M. The secretary will then notify the teacher. The parent or another designated person (student or friend) may get the work from the office after 3:00 P.M.
2. Send a note to the teacher requesting work. It may be picked up in the office after 3:00 P.M. Siblings in the building may pick up make-up work in the office after the 3:00 dismissal bell. **Homework will not be sent home on the first day of an absence.** Students may collect missed assignments when they return the next day. If students are absent 2 or more days, homework will be collected beginning with the second day of absence.

A student who is absent from school will **not** be allowed to participate in **any** after school activities on the day of the absence. Any exceptions to this will be considered on an individual basis by administration.

### **MILK PROGRAM**

Milk may be purchased at school. Milk should be paid for by the week on Mondays. Please place the money in an envelope with your child's name and grade and have the student give this to the teacher. Prices will be announced at the beginning of each school year.

### **NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY**

Seventh and eighth grade students are eligible for membership in the Mother Teresa Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society. Candidates will become eligible for consideration the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Candidates must have completed one semester of full-time enrollment to be eligible for consideration, and must have a cumulative scholastic average of 95 beginning with the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Candidates shall then be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, character and citizenship. The selection of each member to the chapter shall be a majority vote of the faculty council. The National Council and the NASSP shall not review the judgment of the faculty council regarding selection of individual members to local chapters.

## **OFFICE HOURS**

The school office will be open from 7:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. daily. At any other time, parents may leave a message on the answering machine. The office may also be reached via e-mail: [secretary@smsgschool.org](mailto:secretary@smsgschool.org).

## **OFFICIAL SCHOOL POLICIES**

Policies may be found at the back of the handbook. Official school policies are also stored in the school office. The policies are reviewed and updated yearly by the School Advisory Council.

## **OMBUDSMAN COMMITTEE**

The members of the Ombudsman Committee are faithful members of St. Maria Goretti parish. The committee is another means for families to make inquiries, offer comments or share concerns that will be brought to the attention of the Friars and then the Administration. Responses will be given to the Ombudsman who will contact the originator of the communication. The contact information for the committee members is posted in the school office.

## **OPEN HOUSE AND CLASSROOM VISITATION**

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School annually holds an open house for parents and friends to visit the school and to observe students at work. Open house is usually held during Catholic School's Week. This classroom visitation day is scheduled for adult visitation only and we ask that you do not bring young children.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RECESS**

All students are expected to dress properly to enable them to go outside for recess and PE. A doctor's note is required for a student to stay indoors for medical reasons. A doctor's note is also required to excuse a child from PE.

All students must wear the required white tennis shoes to PE class for safety reasons. A student excused from PE for a medical reason may not participate in school sports program until able to participate in PE.

## **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards will be sent home at the end of each nine-week marking period. The parents are to acknowledge that they have received the report card by signing and returning the report card acknowledgement.

## **RETENTION**

St. Maria Goretti Catholic School reserves the right of not promoting a student who does not meet the achievement level of the school. Retention is done only after consultation between home and school regarding the benefits to the child. Retention may be necessary for a child who has excessive absences and who has not satisfactorily made up class work.

## **SAFETY AND PLAYGROUND**

In order for all of our students to enjoy safe and enjoyable play, the following policies and rules have been established. One rule governing all other rules is RESPECT. This includes respectful language.

Students must use playground equipment appropriately. Students must remain on the playground in view of the supervisor. The church, administration building, and the St. Maria Center are out of bounds. No food is allowed on the playground. Bathroom needs must be taken care of before a student goes to the playground area. Students do not enter the building without permission from the playground supervisor.

1. Frisbees are not allowed at any time.
2. Tackle football is not allowed at any time. Only touch football may be played.
3. Toys from home are not to be brought to school. Playground equipment will be provided by each teacher.
4. Baseball is not allowed at recess.

## **SCHOOL DAY**

School begins at 7:50 A.M. and ends at 3:00 P.M. Students may be dropped off as early as 7:25 A.M. and must be picked up by 3:20 P.M.

## **SCHOOL PARTIES**

Classroom parties will be held during the school day in observance of announced holidays. Party dates will be announced at the beginning of the school year. Parents are asked not to bring siblings of students to the parties due to space restrictions.

## **SCRIP**

SCRIP is an important source of revenue for St. Maria Goretti Catholic School. In order to foster the development of the SCRIP program and to ensure that the budgeted revenue is achieved for the school year, the following policy will be followed:

The amount budgeted each year from SCRIP revenue will be divided equally by the number of families anticipated to be in attendance during the budgeted school year. The calculated amount will be assessed to each family as a SCRIP fee. Each family must choose one of the following options:

1. Pay the SCRIP fee in full by June 30.
2. Pay \$32.00 per month for 10 months to be added to their tuition payment.
3. Purchase SCRIP from the school during the SCRIP year.

If a family chooses to purchase SCRIP to cover their SCRIP fee and the profits from those purchases do not cover the fee, then the balance must be paid by May 31<sup>st</sup> of the budgeted school year or final report cards will be held until all fees are paid, and upcoming year's registration may be forfeited.

After a participating family has earned enough profit to cover their SCRIP fee for the budgeted year or paid their SCRIP fee in full, profit generated from SCRIP will be divided with the family. One hundred percent (100%) of the SCRIP profit generated by a family will apply to meeting the family's SCRIP fee obligation after which (50%) of the SCRIP profit generated by a family will be applied to future tuition payments or registration for the following school year.

SCRIP profits will be figured monthly from May 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>. The profits will be applied to the balance of the SCRIP fee or presented to the family in the form of a voucher to be used on future tuition payments or registration fees. The original tuition voucher must be presented with the tuition payment in order to receive credit for the amount of the voucher. Any SCRIP profit unused by May 31<sup>st</sup> of the budgeted school year will be held in a general SCRIP reserve account until September 30<sup>th</sup> for tuition payment in the upcoming school year. Any credits left in the general SCRIP reserve account on October 1<sup>st</sup> will be forfeited.

### **SEARCHES OF STUDENTS AND SCHOOL**

The principal may conduct a reasonable search of a student on the school premises if she has probable cause to believe that the student has in his/her possession an item, the possession of would constitute a criminal offense under the laws of the state. The search will be made in the presence of a third party. The principal may conduct a search of the physical plant of the school, including lockers and desks, on suspicion of a threat to the health, welfare, or safety of all students.

### **S.M.E.E.D.**

St. Maria Goretti School offers before and after care on the school campus. S.M.E.E.D. (St. Maria's Extended Educational Day) operates from 7:00 A.M. – 7:25 A.M. and also 3:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M. S.M.E.E.D. will also be available on early dismissal days. Students who arrive early (before 7:25) or are not picked up by 3:20 will be placed in S.M.E.E.D. Parents will be responsible for the charge.

### **SNOW DAYS**

In the event that classes must be canceled because of snow/ice, school closings will be announced on a major television network announced at the beginning of each year and posted on the school website [smgschool.org](http://smgschool.org). This channel is usually Channel 5 (NBC). Announcements will be made by 6:00am. If a snow day is called, be assured it is called with only safety in mind for students, teachers, and parents. On some occasions, school may be delayed until 10:00 A.M. to allow for roads/streets to be cleared. On these days, students may begin arriving at 9:30 A.M. School will dismiss at 3:00 P.M. on these days.

## **SPECIAL TESTING**

Either the school or the parents may request specialized testing to rule out possible learning disabilities. A copy of the testing results shall be placed in the student's permanent file to assist with the educational program offered for each student.

## **SPRIT**

As part of tuition and to encourage greater parent involvement, St. Maria Goretti School requires each family to participate in the SPRIT program. SPRIT is an acronym for St. Maria Goretti Parents Involved to Render Inspiration and Time. SPRIT hours constitute an important but intangible part of the yearly budget of the school. Therefore, all families must either meet their SPRIT obligation or provide financial assistance to replace the volunteer hours.

1. SPRIT will be under the direction of a coordinator who will report to the principal of the school. The coordinator will administer the program.
2. All families at registration will commit to performing 40 hours of approved work at the school between June 1 and May 31 as their SPRIT contribution. 10 of these hours must be completed for Kountry Karnival or and the Dinner Dance/Auction. The 10 hours not completed for Kountry Karnival or Dinner Dance/Auction cannot be made up. During the school year, the coordinator will keep a record of hours worked or money contributed. Periodic family SPRIT account reports will be distributed and monthly reports will be available upon request. Anyone over the age of 18 who volunteers at the school must complete the required diocesan training for keeping children safe prior to performing any service for the school.
3. The coordinator will develop with the principal an approved list of jobs from which parents will be able to select their preferences and from which the coordinator will assign work based on availability of jobs. Other activities may qualify for SPRIT hours as determined by application to the SPRIT coordinator or the Principal. Officially sponsored school organizations, such as the Home and School Association, the Kountry Karnival Committee and all Scouting groups may award SPRIT hours for participation in their activities in consultation with the Principal.
4. Each family will provide receipts for the number of SPRIT hours worked to the school office. The organizer or supervisor of the activity must sign the receipt. The coordinator will record the hours as a part of the school record of financial responsibility.
5. Students of families who have not completed the SPRIT program commitment will be charged at a rate of \$20.00 for each hour not completed. The total amount owed for SPRIT hours not contributed during the school year shall be paid on or before May 31. Students are not eligible for re-admission until the SPRIT fees are paid in full.
6. The coordinator will be selected by the principal from interested parents who apply for the position. The coordinator is a part-time employee of the school.
7. The SAC will authorize the Principal to review hardship cases and to determine if a family will be exempt from part or all SPRIT service. Families with hardships must

apply with the principal for special consideration.

8. The Advisory Council will evaluate the SPIRIT program as needed but in any event no less often than once each April.

9. Teachers and full time staff are exempt from the 40 hour obligation.

### **STATUTORY NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT ARREST**

Article 15.27 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure requires the police to give a private school, in which a child is enrolled, oral or written notification that the child has been arrested for a felony or certain misdemeanors. The oral or written notification required by this article of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure or any other statute, to a school, that a student has been arrested for a felony or misdemeanor that the law requires the police to notify the school of the arrest is grounds for the expulsion of the student from school. Any student, who is required to register as a sex offender, shall be expelled from the school.

### **TARDINESS**

If a student is late for class, a note from the parent must accompany the student for the tardy to be excused. A student is considered tardy if he/she is not in his/her seat and ready to begin work at the 7:50 A.M. bell. From 7:50 to 8:00 students should report directly to the classroom. After 8:00, the student must first report to the school office for a tardy pass prior to reporting to class.

Students who arrive after 7:50 A.M. on days in which the school is attending mass will be supervised in the library until mass has concluded. Students should check in at the office prior to reporting to the library.

Tardies and absences are recorded as part of a student's cumulative record. A student may be retained in a grade as a result of excessive absences. All unexcused tardies once a student's tardy record reaches 10 unexcused tardies will be assessed a \$5.00 fine per unexcused tardy. Excessive unexcused tardies may also result in the loss of the student's status in the registration process.

Dismissal for medical and dental appointments or for family reasons is granted when a written request is made. The child must be picked up at the school office by the parents. Parents are urged to keep such requests to a minimum and are encouraged to make arrangements for these appointments after school, during vacation periods, or the afternoon of early dismissal days.

### **TELEPHONES**

Students may use the telephone for important and/or emergency situations. The staff will determine the need for the student. The teacher will give the student a pass to give to the office secretary. Students may not use the phone if the request would cause an inconvenience to someone else. Examples for which telephone use will not be permitted are: asking parents to bring forgotten homework, a forgotten lunch, asking permission to go home with a friend and/or to go home in a different carpool, etc. Students **may not use a personal cell phone during the school day or during SMEED. Cell phones will be confiscated.**

## TESTING

Standardized tests (Iowa Test of Basic Skills) are given each year in grades 1-8. Parents will receive an individual report once the results are returned to the school.

## TEXTBOOKS

All textbooks are on a rental basis only (part of the registration fee). Students will be charged for damaged or lost books (price of a new text). Books must be covered at all times and stamped with the school stamp. A fine (50 cents) will be imposed if after repeated warnings a textbook is not covered.

## TUITION

Tuition payments are made directly to the school on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month over a ten or eleven month period. A \$25.00 late fee is assessed each month for payments arriving after the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

It is the responsibility of the parents to notify the school administration of temporary financial difficulties so that a financial arrangement may be agreed upon with the administrator and the pastor.

## UNIFORM CODE

### GIRLS:

- Jumper (K-5)
- Blouse with navy piping (K-2 only)
- Suspenders on skirt (K-3 only)
- Skirt
- White knit top – long or short sleeve
- White blouse
- White oxford blouse
- Pullover sweater vest (red K-5) (emblem required worn on left over heart)
- Cardigan (emblem required on cardigan worn on left over heart – red K-5)
- Navy walking shorts (plain or with pleats and cuffs)
- Navy slacks

### Jewelry:

Only girls may wear earrings. Girls may wear one pair (stud only) earrings. Only one earring per ear is allowed under the uniform code. Jewelry should be worn in moderation. Students may wear one necklace (if simple and religious - simple chain with pendant) and one bracelet if simple and religious. **The administration reserves the right to ask a student to remove jewelry which may be deemed inappropriate or excessive.**

### Make-up:

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade girls may wear make-up in moderation. Clear finger nail polish is acceptable under the uniform code. Dark lipstick may not be worn to school. Eye make-up is prohibited. **The administration reserves the right to ask a student to remove make-up worn to school which may be deemed inappropriate.**

## BOYS

Blue knit shirt – long or short sleeve  
Blue oxford shirt – long or short sleeve  
Pullover sweater (navy -emblem required worn on left over heart)  
Cardigan (navy –emblem required worn on left over heart)  
Navy walking shorts (elastic back)  
Navy pants

## JUNIOR HIGH

Khaki shorts, pants  
Khaki skirts for girls  
Navy jumper for girls  
Blue/white pinstriped shirt – long or short sleeve  
White cotton blouse that is designed not to be tucked in for girls  
Black or brown belt for boys  
Navy sweater or vest (school emblem required worn on left over heart - boys and girls)

## ALL

**Dress down days-** K-8<sup>th</sup> grades: uniform bottoms or solid blue jeans may be worn with a SMG spirit shirt, Kountry Karnival shirt or a Fun Run shirt.

Socks – solid white only (**no logos**) and **crew length** is the required sock length. Girls may wear white tights with crew socks during cold weather.

Shoes – **solid white tennis shoes only** with white laces and logos. Shoes must have closed toes and heels.

T-shirts worn under uniform shirts/blouses **must be solid white without writing.**

Hair- Students are asked to keep hair looking neat and natural at all times. This means regular hair cuts for boys with hair kept above shirt collar and not covering eyebrows or ears. **Colored or streak hair is prohibited** and parents will be contacted to return hair to original color. It can be very expensive to “reverse” colored or streaked hair. Boys may not have “strands of hair” (i.e. tails), lines, or designs cut into the hair. The administration reserves the right to ask a student to correct any hair style that is not deemed appropriate.

Skirt length- skirts or jumpers must be just above the knee.

Headbands for girls may not be wider than 2 inches (no scarves) and all headbands and hair bows must be one of the following: solid (white, red, navy) or uniform plaid. Polka dots violate uniform dress code.

Required dress for all school masses is uniform pants for boys and skirts or jumpers for girls. Shorts may not be worn.

## **UNIFORMS**

Uniforms must be purchased from Parker Uniform, the official uniform store.

## **VACATIONS**

Parents are requested to make every effort not to plan vacations or other out of school activities during days that school is in session. Free days will be published in the school calendar.

Vacations/family trips are normally considered unexcused absences from school. Students will not be allowed to make up tests or assignments that occurred during an unexcused absence from school.

## **VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS**

The school is concerned with providing students and employees with a safe and productive environment. As such, the school expressly prohibits any and all acts or threats of violence by or against any student, employee, and family member of a student, vendor, or other visitor to the school facilities. This policy applies to all students and employees, whether or not they are engaged in business on behalf of the school, and whether or not they are on school premises.

The school strictly prohibits the possession of, exhibiting or threatening to exhibit or to use, or use of any and all weapons, including handguns, on school premises by any student or employee, family member of a student, vendor, or other visitor, whether licensed or unlicensed and whether concealed or visible. School premises include not only the main facilities, but also parking lots, entrances and exits, break areas, etc. Students and employees are further prohibited from possession of, exhibiting or threatening to exhibit or to use, or the use of any and all weapons while conducting business on behalf of the school off of school premises.

## **VISITATION OF STUDENTS DURING SCHOOL HOURS**

Persons, agencies, or organizations are discouraged from contacting individual students during the school day. If an emergency exists, permission from the principal must first be obtained before speaking with a student. Students are not allowed to leave the classroom to speak to non-school personnel other than the child's parent or guardian, unless the principal or her representative is present. A non-legal guardian may not use the school for the exercise of visitation rights.

## **VISITORS**

All visitors must report to the office to obtain a visitor's badge and to sign the visitor's register. Parent/visitors to the building must check in with the office before proceeding to classrooms. Please do not go to the door of any classroom without first obtaining permission from the office.

## **WITHDRAWAL, CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE**

The school office should be notified early of plans to move from the area or to transfer a child to another school. In the event of a student requesting admittance or a transfer to another Catholic school within the diocese, the parent(s) must contact the principal for completion of a transfer/withdrawal form before the receiving school is allowed to register the student. School transcripts are not released directly to the parent. The new school must request the student's records in writing. Transcripts are sent from St. Maria Goretti Catholic School to another school only after all books are returned and all fees and tuition are paid. The student's health record may be obtained from the office on the day of withdrawal.

The school must keep up-to-date records of addresses and phone numbers. It is the responsibility of the parents to keep the school office informed of all such changes. This is essential for the well being of student in case a student gets hurt or needs the immediate attention of his/her parents.

Parents will provide the school with a street address for record purposes. A post office box number may be listed in the school directory if so requested by the parent.

## OFFICIAL SCHOOL POLICIES

### 1.1 School Advisory Council By-Laws

Note: These by-laws are the rules which the SMG School Advisory Council imposes on itself to cover its action.

#### 1. Order of Meetings

The order of the meetings of the S.M.G. School Advisory Council is:

- I. Call to Order and Opening Prayer
- II. Routine Matters
  - A. Routine
    1. Roll Call
    2. Recognition of Guests
    3. Approval of Minutes
  - B. Old Business - Points that the Council is deciding
  - C. New Business – Assignments
- III. Information and Proposals
  - A. Home & School Association
  - B. Administrative Reports
    1. Chair
    2. Principal
    3. Pastor
  - C. Committee Reports
    1. Finance
    2. Development
    3. Facility
    4. Strategic Planning
    5. Others as necessary
  - D. Correspondence
  - E. Suggested topics for future consideration
- IV. Old/New Business
  - A. Committee Assignments
  - B. Future Topics
- V. Adjournment - time and date of next meeting

#### 2. Meetings: Date, Place and Time

The St. Maria Goretti School Advisory Council will meet on a monthly basis, time and date to be determined by the SAC at the beginning of each school year. These meetings are normally held on school property.

#### 3. Election of the Council

- a. The selection of the school advisory members will be held during the month of April by both the Home and School Association and the Parish in accordance with the SAC Constitution.
- b. Members of the School Advisory Council serve a term of office of three (3) years. Terms of offices are staggered to preserve some degree of experience on the council.

- c. Five members will be selected by and from the parents with children in St. Maria Goretti School. These representatives must be active members of the Home and School Association.
- d. Four members will be selected from the members of the St. Maria Goretti Parish. These representatives must be active members of St. Maria Goretti Parish.

#### 4. Effective Items on the Agenda

Unless otherwise stated all policies of the council become effective July 1, following adoption of the policy.

#### 5. Placing Items on the Agenda

- a. Any and all items to be placed on the agenda require review for appropriateness and approval of the executive committee of the School Advisory Council.
- b. Any member of the Council may request that an item be placed on the agenda.
- c. Any person may request a Council member to place an item on the agenda.
- d. The right of non-members to address the Council is limited to those who, in advance of a meeting, present a written request to the School Advisory Council's executive committee asking to place an item on the agenda.
- e. The executive committee will review and set the agenda no less than one week prior to the regularly scheduled Council meeting to review and set the agenda.

### **2.1 SMG Parishioner Status**

Tuition rates for St. Maria Goretti School families will be established by the SMG School Advisory Council annually and are dependent on:

#### DEFINITIONS:

Parishioner - must meet all the following:

- \*Be registered member of St. Maria Goretti Church for six (6) month minimum.
- \*Attend Mass regularly according to church requirements.
- \*Be giving of time, talent, and treasure to the parish community of St. Maria Goretti.
- \*Meet annual church contribution requirements. The contributory amount will be established during school budgeting cycle for the next calendar school year by the Pastor, in consultation with the Parish Finance Council, and the St. Maria Goretti School SAC.

#### Non-Parishioner

- \*Be a baptized member of any other Catholic parish.

#### Non-Catholic

- \*Any family outside of a Catholic parish community.

### **2.2 Attendance**

Regular attendance is an essential component of the educational process. The school's attendance

policy is based upon a strict interpretation of the compulsory attendance laws. Diocesan policy states that chronic absenteeism and tardiness may be grounds for suspension or expulsion.

1. The only reasons for excused absences are personal illness, medical appointments which cannot be scheduled after school, death in the family, or any special circumstances acceptable to the administration of the school.

Absences usually considered unexcused include:

Family vacations outside of the school calendar

Business trips

Family reunions

Weddings outside of the immediate family

2. A consecutive absence of five or more days requires a doctor's statement or it will be considered unexcused.

3. Students who miss school without having an excused absence shall not receive credit for work in the class missed during the unexcused absence. No make-up work for credit shall be allowed for assignments, tests, or other school work missed because of an unexcused absence. Zeros will be given for grades taken during periods with unexcused absences.

4. In accordance with state statute, in excess of 18 days absence for any reason during the school year may result in denial of credit for all or a portion of that year. The family of a student with excessive absences will be contacted in writing by the administration detailing action to be taken. Parents will be given the opportunity to meet with the school administration.

5. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian of each student to call the school by 10:00 A.M. to explain the absence of the student. If the school is not notified by phone, the parent must send a written note to explain the student's absence on the first day the student returns to school. Students' absences not cleared within 72 hours shall be considered unexcused.

6. Students must be in attendance a minimum of two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon to be considered present for the day. If a student is not in attendance for a full two hours either in the morning or in the afternoon, the student will be marked 1/2 day absent for the portion of the day that was missed.

7. The only excused tardies are for medical appointments that cannot be scheduled for after school, a severe family emergency, or other unusual causes acceptable to the administration. All other tardies will be considered unexcused and the student will receive zeros for the work missed during the absence from the classroom.

8. Students who are tardy must have a written communication explaining the reason for their tardiness. Students who do not produce in a reasonable period of time a written note (which may be an email from the parents) for being tardy will be marked as "tardy unexcused".

9. Tardy to class can damage the education process as much as an absence. It disrupts the classroom, causes teachers to repeat ministerial activities and increases administrative duties. For these reasons, tardiness is very serious and ("the tardy policy") is enforced strictly. Drop off time

begins at 7:25 a.m. A student is considered tardy if she/he is not seated in her/his classroom when the second school bell rings at 7:50 a.m. The principal shall be the final arbiter of whether a tardy is excused.

10. Parents will be notified when a student receives an excessive amount of unexcused tardy occurrences during a year. After a student has been tardy eight times, a letter will be sent warning that financial penalties will apply beginning with the tenth tardy occurrence. A \$5 per child per occurrence of unexcused tardiness for each occurrence beyond the ninth such occurrence in a school year will be billed.

11. If a student accumulates more than fifteen unexcused tardies in any school year, the student's Registration Preference may be forfeited for the following year. All unpaid tardy fees shall result in withholding of report cards until the fees are paid in full.

### **2.3 Discipline**

School-wide discipline rules for student conduct will be specified and communicated to both students and parents. Discipline procedures will comply with school and diocesan policy, and parent contact will always be included. Refer to the Parent/Student Handbook and classroom rules for specific disciplinary measures.

### **2.4 School Facilities Security**

The school building will be kept secure during the school day.

All doors to St. Maria Goretti School, the cafetorium and the St. Mary Center will be locked during the school day. Visitors to the school must enter the front school double doors and notify the office of their presence.

### **2.5 Sports**

Grades 6, 7, and 8 of St. Maria Goretti School will participate in the Catholic School Interscholastic Sports Program.

### **2.6 Admission**

St. Maria Goretti School, which includes Pre-School through 8th grade, is open to all students without regard to race, religion, national or ethnic origin. Entrance into this school is through the application procedure. The application must be properly completed before a student can be approved for entrance.

### **2.7 Re-Admission**

During the second semester a pre-registration will be held for those students already enrolled in S.M.G. School. A non-refundable pre-registration fee for each child will be required to hold a place for the following school year unless the family moves from the Metroplex. Parents who fail to pre-register or pay the required fee at the time designated will forfeit the places their children held in the school.

### **2.8 Bad Weather**

The Principal of St. Maria Goretti School will announce school closings or delays. These

announcements will be independent of the Arlington Independent School District, and/or the Diocese of Fort Worth, unless an emergency is declared through the superintendent's office.

## **2.9 Uniforms**

Proper uniforms are worn from the first day of classes through the last day of the school year by grades K-8. School administration will determine the exceptions to policy. Uniforms must be purchased from designated uniform supplier.

## **2.10 Mass Attendance**

The students of St. Maria Goretti School will receive formation in prayer and will undergo daily experiences of prayer. A variety of prayer forms will be used, including the Eucharistic Liturgy. Liturgies will be adapted to the children and planned by the teachers with their students. Liturgies will be submitted to the presider for final approval.

## **3.1 Emergency Fund**

St. Maria Goretti School is blessed with parents, staff and children who give generously of their time, talent and treasure. Occasionally, however, emergencies make it difficult for a family to meet its financial obligation to the School. Therefore, the SMG Advisory Council has created an Emergency Fund to assist with school-related expenses. The following rules shall be followed regarding the funds:

1. Each year during the budget cycle, the SMG Advisory Council shall allocate monies to the Emergency Fund adequate to defer total fees (including without limitation registration, tuition, and one-time fees) for one academic year not less than tuition for three students, each from different families. Funding may exceed this amount if directed by the SMG Advisory Council. All SMG families shall be notified of existence of fund in registration packets annually. If the Fund becomes in danger of depletion, the Fund Committee shall notify the Advisory Council for determination of whether additional funds should be set aside for that year's operation.
2. Families may make application by contacting the principal of St. Maria Goretti Parish. They may apply for specific amount or an amount determined at the "discretion of the Emergency Fund Committee." The Emergency Fund Committee is composed of the school principal and the school bookkeeper. The applicant should state reason for application and a reasonably detailed statement of financial condition of applicant. The Fund Committee may request additional information in its sole discretion, including evidence of applicant's efforts to minimize expenses. The Fund Committee may deny grants for failure to supply all requested information, failure to demonstrate adequate need, prior to anticipated abuse or aid, or for any other reason. Applicant must be willing to submit independent verification of financial condition at request of Fund Committee. All information and any communication between the Emergency Fund Committee and the applicant are confidential.
3. Any single grant may be up to total current or following semester fees for all family members attending SMG School or in such smaller amounts as the Fund Committee may discern in its sole discretion to be adequate to the stated need. Receipt of a prior grant shall not affect consideration of additional grants to that family. Grants shall be made in kind rather than by check. An amount equal to the grant for fees to be paid to the school shall be transferred from the fund to the school's operating revenues.

### **3.2 Financial Assistance**

Saint Maria Goretti Catholic School does not discriminate in the administration of its financial assistance on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

Financial assistance at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School is based on a family's demonstrated financial need. In order to receive local financial assistance, families must first apply through the diocesan financial assistance program. Local assistance will be determined by the local Financial Assistance Committee, including but not limited to a school administrator and the pastor.

### **3.3 Purchase of SCRIP**

SCRIP is an important source of revenue to St. Maria Goretti School. In order to foster the development of the SCRIP program and to ensure that the budgeted revenue is achieved for the school year, the following policy will be followed:

The amount budgeted each year from SCRIP revenue will be divided equally by the number of families anticipated to be in attendance during the budgeted school year. The calculated amount will be assessed to each family as a SCRIP fee. Each family must sign a SCRIP agreement at time of registration, stating their intentions of payment by choosing one of the following options:

1. Pay the SCRIP fee in full by June 30.
2. Pay \$32.00 per month for 10 months to be added to their tuition payment.
3. Purchase SCRIP from the school during the SCRIP year.

If a family chooses to purchase SCRIP to cover their SCRIP fee and the profits from those purchases do not cover the fee, then the balance must be paid by May 31<sup>st</sup> of the budgeted school year or final report cards will be held until all fees are paid, and the upcoming year's registration may be forfeited. A family may change options at any given time throughout the school year, but must inform the school of their option change in writing.

After a participating family has earned enough profit to cover their SCRIP fee for the budgeted year or paid their SCRIP fee in full, profit generated from SCRIP will be divided with the family. One hundred percent (100%) of the SCRIP profit generated by a family will apply to meeting the family's SCRIP fee obligation after which fifty percent (50%) of the SCRIP profit generated by a family will be applied to future tuition payments or registration for the following school year.

The SCRIP year runs from May 1<sup>st</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>. SCRIP profits will be figured 3 times in the SCRIP year, at the end of summer, before registration, and after April 30<sup>th</sup>. The profits will be applied to the balance of the SCRIP fee or presented to the family in the form of a voucher to be used on future tuition payments or registration fees. The original tuition voucher must be presented with the tuition payment in order to receive credit for the amount of the voucher. Any SCRIP profit unused by May 31<sup>st</sup> of the budgeted school year will be held in a general SCRIP reserved account until September 30<sup>th</sup> for tuition payment in the upcoming school year. Any credits left in the general SCRIP reserve account on October 1<sup>st</sup> will be forfeited.

### **3.4 Kountry Karnival**

The Kountry Karnival is the single most important fundraiser for St. Maria Goretti Catholic School. It

provides much needed funds for operation of the school, which helps to keep tuition reasonable. It creates a significant opportunity for parents of school children to contribute their time and talent to the school community. It also fosters fellowship among school faculty, attendees, parents, and the parish community. This policy sets forth broad parameters for the operation of Kountry Karnival and the relationship of the Kountry Karnival Committee to St. Maria Goretti Catholic School and to its School Advisory Council (SAC).

## I. Relationship of Kountry Karnival to SAC

A. As a fundraiser for St. Maria Goretti Catholic School, the Kountry Karnival operates under the direction and control of the SAC. Because of its size and complexity, the Kountry Karnival Committee acts as a committee of the SAC. The Kountry Karnival Committee is headed and staffed by parent volunteers approved by the Executive Committee of the Home and School Association in consultation with the Advisory Council.

B. In November of each year, the Home and School Association will inform the School Advisory Council of its selection of the Kountry Karnival Committee chairs and members. The Kountry Karnival Chair/s must not be directly in control of any of the other major fundraiser for the school the year he/she is chair for Kountry Karnival. In order to insure chair is fully focused on Kountry Karnival as it is our most important fundraiser.

C. Each primary function of the preparation for and operation of the Kountry Karnival will be directed by a subcommittee. Each subcommittee will be chaired by a parent volunteer that will also serve on the Kountry Karnival Committee.

D. This policy must be provided to all Kountry Karnival subcommittee chairs when they accept the chair responsibility.

## II. Operating Budget

A. As soon as practicable, the Kountry Karnival Committee will present a budget for the next year's operations to the Advisory Council for approval. This budget must be presented no later than March 31<sup>st</sup>.

B. The Kountry Karnival budget shall include:

1. Appropriation of a specified amount of funds to be used for start-up expenses;
2. An estimated revenue and net profit;
3. Suggested uses of profits exceeding the amount budgeted by the Advisory Council for Kountry Karnival's contribution of the next year's school revenues.

C. The School Advisory Council shall vote to approve or modify the proposed budget as appropriate. The School Advisory Council shall take into account all goals of the school community in approval of the budget: excellence in education; fair wages for its employees; and affordable tuition. The Advisory Council, in consultation with the administration has final responsibility for determining the use to which Kountry Karnival profits are put, but it shall pay appropriate deference to the recommendation of the Kountry Karnival Committee, as they most represent the part of the school committee most directly involved in its generation.

D. The chair of the Kountry Karnival Committee shall present a final report to the Advisory Council of the results of that year's Kountry Karnival. The Advisory Council shall vote to approve

or revise the final report at the January meeting so that the results may be incorporated into the next year's budget, as practicable. The school administration will supply the Kountry Karnival Committee with all information necessary for the Committee to create its final report.

E. Upon approval of the final report, the Advisory Council shall authorize the administration to make the purchases of fund projects from the profits of the Kountry Karnival as specified in the budget.

### III. Kountry Karnival Cash Office

The cash office functions as the central collection, disbursement, and recording control for the cash flow of money during the Kountry Karnival. As such, certain guidelines are required for the proper safekeeping and recordation of all cash receipts and disbursements.

A. The Kountry Karnival cash office should be sufficiently staffed and tasks delegated for the following positions:

(1) Chairperson/s

(2) Vault Cashier

(3) Window Cashier

(4) Money Counters

B. Procedures for the flow of money from the booths to the cash office are as follows:

1. Each morning of KK collectors/runners (assigned by cash office) will deliver to each booth one bag which will contain the start up change purse/bag.
2. Periodically (or as determined necessary by Cash Office) collectors/runners will collect money from each booth. Collectors/runners will have specific purse/bags issued to them by the cash office for the purpose of collecting monies. Once money is collected the collector/runner will seal the bag in the presence of the booth manager and record booth information on each purse/bag.
3. The collector/runner will deliver collection purse/bag to cash office window for the window cashier to accept and log. All monies delivered to cash office must be logged in through window for the window cashier to accept and log. All monies delivered to cash office must be logged in through window by window cashier. Under no circumstances shall money enter cash office without being recorded by window cashier.
4. Money counters will count the money collected in the purse/bags (twice by two different counters) and place counted money in "designated location" in cash office.
5. The vault cashier will insure all monies are transferred from "designated location" to "vault" for safekeeping. The only people allowed to deposit or withdraw funds from "vault" will be the vault cashier and chairperson.
6. Once funds are in the "vault" chairperson and vault cashier will prepare funds for deposit and or cash office operations/procedures. Both the office chairperson and vault cashier will count and prepare each bank deposit. Only money necessary for next day start up will remain in "cash office" at close of Karnival.
7. Bank deposits should be made as often as necessary and feasible. The cash office chairperson and or vault cashier accompanied by a police officer should deliver the deposit bags to the bank.

C. Additional Cash Office Procedures:

1. The Kountry Karnival cash office will cash personal checks up to a \$250.00 limit per family per day and will require a valid driver's license for verification. The chairperson or vault cashier may halt check cashing activity if (s) he deems.
2. The cash office chairperson will be in charge of key to "Cash Office" and key for night deposit.
3. All money not deposited during Kountry Karnival weekend will be kept in secure and locked location on schools grounds.
4. A pre-approved list of workers will be posted in the cash office. All workers must sign in and out on the attendance log provided by the "cash office".
5. Husbands and wives may not work together in the cash office. Immediate relatives/family members cannot work together in the booth during the same block of time.

IV. Disbursements

A. Upon approval of a budget, the Kountry Karnival Committee will be responsible for disbursing funds for planning, setting-up and operating the Kountry Karnival. If an item has been included in the approved budget, the chair of the Kountry Karnival Committee need not request the specific approval of the Advisory Council to expend the sum so budgeted. The Kountry Karnival Committee chair may delegate the responsibility of approving and tracking expenditures and revenues to his/her designate.

B. Disbursements shall be made in accordance with the policies of the School Advisory Council with respect to school expenditures. In addition to these procedures, however, the chair of the Kountry Karnival Committee or his/her delegate, as appropriate, shall approve all disbursements prior to making them and shall account for all expenditures and all revenue in accounts designed to provide an accounting of the profitability of the Karnival annual performance. Disbursements in excess of budgeted amount, and all disbursements made after the budgeted start-up funds are spent, must be approved by the School Advisory Council.

C. All payments to vendors and police officers will be made via check, not cash.

D. Checks to be dispersed during the Kountry Karnival weekend will require receipt/contract, approval of Kountry Karnival Chair and approval of the Principal.

E. An authorized signer should be available at specific times on each day of Kountry Karnival. The times should be negotiated with the cash office and the authorized signer/s in advance of the event.

V. Additional operating policies

- A. The Kountry Karnival Committee and its subcommittees shall prepare, maintain and update a procedures and operations manual.
- B. The manual will contain a record of past operating procedures that have been successful. The Kountry Karnival Committee and its subcommittees should respect its content and follow its direction to the extent feasible and deemed advisable to the affected subcommittee.

- C. The manual will not be approved by the School Advisory Council in advance but if additional or different procedures regarding the handling of money are deemed necessary by the Kountry Karnival Committee, they will be submitted to the Advisory Council for approval and incorporation into this policy.

### **3.5 Accounting Practices, Procedures and Guidelines**

The School Advisory Council is responsible for developing and maintaining a set of procedures compliant with generally accepted principles, or all guidelines and accounting procedures utilized at St. Maria Goretti Catholic School All Procedures and guidelines will become part of the implementation section of this policy.

#### **A. Cash or Check Disbursements**

Any cash disbursement including a salary check, pay advance, travel advance or reimbursement to St. Maria Goretti School employees or volunteers must be approved, signed and dated by the school principal or assistant principal. Any payment or reimbursement made to the school principal or assistant principal must signed and dated by the alternate signee.

All invoices must be presented to the school principal or assistant principal for review and approval prior to payment. Initialed and approved invoices are then forwarded to the bookkeeper for check processing. Checks are reviewed and signed by the principal or assistant principal and returned to the bookkeeper for distribution by mail or kidmail. Paid invoices with check stub attached are filed alphabetically by the bookkeeper. The bookkeeper maintains a file for current year paid invoices. Yearly, the file is purged and all prior year invoices are moved to storage.

Travel advances are available to school employees who are required to travel outside the immediate area on school business with the approval of the principal. The employee has five business days following completion of the business trip to submit unused funds along with an expense report to the school principal. All claimed expenses must be supported by appropriate original documents such as receipts, charge slips, ticket stubs, etc... Receipts should be included for all expensed incurred regardless of amount.

#### **B. Bank Accounts/Petty Cash**

Over the course of the year, the school's bank account balances (checking and saving) will fluctuate. When the checking account balance substantially exceeds current cash requirements, the excess funds will be placed in the Diocesan savings account which generally yields a higher interest rate. If the checking account balance drops below the amount required for upcoming school expenses, funds will be transferred from savings to bring the account up to an acceptable balance.

Weekly, the bookkeeper monitors the school's bank balances and cash requirements. Monthly, the principal and bookkeeper review the balances and requirements and decide if transfers or funds are necessary. A recommendation is then made to the School Advisory Council for transfer of funds to or from the diocesan savings account. The School Advisor Council is responsible for the final approval of the transfer of funds.

A petty cash fund of \$1000.00 will be maintained for change for the front office and scrip sales, to cash small employee checks and to pay minor expenses incurred by school employees. Expenses to be paid out of petty cash include miscellaneous office supplies, postage and other small expenses deemed necessary by the principal. All requests for payment must be initialed by the principal or assistant principal and will be documented in a petty cash ledger maintained by the bookkeeper.

C. Expense Approval Exceeding Budget

The school principal may approve an expense up to \$500 that is not budgeted or that exceeds its budgeted amount. An expense that exceeds \$500 that is not budgeted or that exceeds its budgeted amount requires approval by a quorum of Council members. The Council will vote approval of such an expense at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

D. Inventory of Property and Equipment

Due to the possibility of fire, theft, or other loss, it is necessary that a detailed list of all school property and equipment be maintained. The list will include all school equipment, furnishing, tables, chairs, and other property. The list will also provide a means to monitor the location of such assets.

A checklist developed by the principal with assistance from the teachers and staff will contain a complete list of school property in each room in the school. At the beginning and end of each school year, each teacher and other staff as required will use the checklist to verify and/or record the property in their respective rooms. Discrepancies are to be documented. The principal and assistant principal with assistance from the teachers will reconcile the beginning and end of year inventory lists and explain any discrepancies. These lists will be maintained by the principal for safekeeping. If deemed necessary, the School Advisory Council will commission videotapes of the schoolrooms for support documentation.

### **3.6 Tuition**

St. Maria Goretti School shall offer a cafeteria-style tuition payment program each year to the families of each student.

Upon selecting a tuition payment option, tuition is due on the first day of the payment period. Annual tuition payments are due on July 1. Semi-annual tuition payments are due on July 1 and January 1, the following year. Quarterly tuition payments are due on July 1, October 1, January 1, and March 1 of the following year. Monthly tuition payments are due on the first day of each month of school, July through April for ten month payment option and July through May for eleven month option. Tuition is past due if not paid by the 15th day after it is due.

Each year the School Advisory Council shall review the menu of the tuition payment options prior to the enrollment period and make adjustments deemed necessary. Each family will select a tuition payment method at enrollment time. A family may select any payment plan it desires. Families who are Chronically Delinquent in paying tuition may **not** have the option to select from the payment plans and subject to the discretion of the principal may be subject to **Immediate Expulsion** from the school.

Chronically Delinquent is defined as behind two or more months in tuition payment and such delinquencies have occurred twice or more during the last two years.

If a family is unable to pay the current tuition because of emergencies, it is the parent's and/or guardian's responsibility to promptly contact the principal. The principal, if necessary, will develop with the family an alternative tuition payment plan to address the family emergency.

### **3.7 Delinquent Tuition**

Prompt payment of tuition is essential to the ongoing operations of St. Maria Goretti School. Each family during the annual school enrollment period will select one of the methods for paying tuition from the school's tuition program. Tuition is past due if not paid by the 15th day after due. Prompt payment of tuition is the responsibility of each student's parent/guardian. Any family which becomes delinquent on tuition will be assessed a \$25 late fee or other penalties that may be imposed by the school or its third party tuition collection agent.

If a family is unable to pay the current tuition because of an emergency, it is the parent/guardian's responsibility to promptly contact the school administration.

Families delinquent more than three months are subject to dismissal from the school. The school administrator or the administrator's designee is responsible for administering delinquent accounts.

### **3.8 Spirit**

SPIRIT is an acronym for St. Maria Goretti Parents Involved to Render Inspiration and Time. SPIRIT hours cover many tasks that would otherwise need to be worked by a paid employee. This is an important part of the yearly budget of the school. Therefore, all families must either meet their SPIRIT obligation or provide financial assistance to replace the volunteer hours.

1. SPIRIT will be under the direction of a coordinator who will report to the principal of the school. The coordinator will administer the program.
2. All families at registration will commit to performing 40 hours of approved work at the school between June 1 and May 31 as their SPIRIT contribution. 10 of these hours must be completed at Kountry Karnival or and the Dinner Dance/Auction. The 10 hours not completed for Kountry Karnival or Dinner Dance/Auction cannot be made up. During the school year, the coordinator

will keep a record of hours worked or money contributed. Periodic family SPIRIT account reports will be distributed and monthly reports will be available upon request. Anyone over the age of 18 who volunteers at the school must complete the required diocesan training for keeping children safe prior to performing any service for the school.

3. The coordinator will develop with the principal an approved list of jobs from which parents will be able to select their preferences and from which the coordinator will assign work based on availability of jobs. Other activities may qualify for SPIRIT hours as determined by application to the SPIRIT coordinator or the Principal. Officially sponsored school organizations, such as the Home and School Association, the Kountry Karnival Committee and all Scouting groups may award SPIRIT hours for participation in their activities in consultation with the Principal.

4. Each family will provide receipts for the number of SPIRIT hours worked to the school office. The organizer or supervisor of the activity must sign the receipt. The coordinator will record the hours as a part of the school record of financial responsibility. Parents with jobs designated as automatically filling requirements must still report hours.

5. Students of families who have not completed the SPIRIT program commitment will be charged at a rate of \$20.00 for each hour not completed. The total amount owed for SPIRIT hours not contributed during the school year shall be paid on or before May 31. Students are not eligible for re-admission until the SPIRIT fees are paid in full.

6. The coordinator will be selected by the principal from interested parents who apply for the position. The coordinator is a part-time employee of the school.

7. The SAC will authorize the Principal to review hardship cases and to determine if a family will be exempt from part or all SPIRIT service. Families with hardships must apply with the principal for special consideration.

8. The Advisory Council will evaluate the SPIRIT program as needed but in any event no less often than once each April.

9. Teachers and full time staff are exempt from the 40 SPIRIT hour obligation.

#### **4.1 Unsatisfactory Performance**

Teachers will communicate with the parents or guardians of their pupils at the earliest indication of any student who is to receive a grade of "F" or "N" in any subject, a grade of "F" in conduct or "4" in effort. Frequent communications should continue between the parent/guardian and teacher until a passing grade is achieved. In addition, every effort should be made to notify parents or guardians of any significant drop in grades (10 point or more).

Progress reports will be sent out mid-quarter to the parents/guardians of any student with a grade of "C" or lower.

#### **4.2 Class Size**

St. Maria Goretti School will strive to maintain a low student/teacher ratio.

Class sizes will be limited as follows:

Pre-School classes are not to exceed 22 students per class with a maximum number of pre-

schoolers not to exceed 44.

Kindergarten classes may not exceed 22 students per class.

Grades with two classes first through eighth grade will not exceed 26 students per class.

Grades with only one class will not exceed 34 students per class.

### **4.3 Honor Roll**

Students in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades are eligible to participate in the honor roll program. The program will recognize those students who have demonstrated excellence in academics and personal conduct at the end of each grading period (quarter) of the school year.

An honor roll will be published and displayed for grades 6 through 8 at the end of each quarter. Honors will be determined by the following:

High Honors 95.0 - 102.0

Honors 90.0 - 94.9

A student earning a C or below in any subject will only be eligible for Honors.

In addition to the academic grades, each student must have a conduct grade of A for High Honors and a grade of B to be eligible for Honors consideration.

### **5.1 Teacher and Staff Benefits**

Each full time and qualifying part time (20 hours per week) faculty and staff member of St. Maria Goretti Catholic School shall enjoy the extra benefits listed below. These benefits are intended to supplement the employee's normal salary and any benefits already provided via diocesan policy. It is recognized by the council that salaries for Catholic school teachers are generally lower than comparable public positions, and that these benefits are offered as a good faith show of non-monetary compensation.

1. School registration fees and one month's tuition may be waived or reduced for children of full or part time teachers and staff members as set annually by the school advisory council.
2. St. Maria Extended Education Day (SMEED) registration fees waived for children.
3. 50% discount on SMEED fees for children.
4. As much as \$200 will be paid to any teacher toward expenses incurred for college level courses approved by the principal. Reimbursement will be made during the subsequent school year.
5. An annual benefit of \$300 paid for full catechist certification.
6. A portion of Home and School Association money raised by the SMG school parents and supporters to be used as "certificates of appreciation, classroom decoration money, or the like." The amount of money is to be determined by the Home and School Executive Board with the approval of the Home and School Association each year. The actual allocation of the funds to individual full and part time employees will be made following the majority decision of the Home and School Executive Board and school principal.
7. SPIRIT hour requirements waived for full or part time employees who are also parents at SMG.

**Parent-Student Handbook Agreement with St. Maria Goretti Catholic School**

The parent/student handbook of St. Maria Goretti Catholic School has been developed to assist parents, teachers, students and administrators with a more thorough understanding of how best the school may serve the needs of its families and its students. By following the guidelines established in the parent/student handbook, all families assist the school in enabling each student to reach his/her full potential while enrolled at SMG. The policies set forth in the handbook allow for the smooth and effective administration of the school and establish clear expectations for students, parents, teachers and administrators.

By reading the handbook with your child(ren) and reviewing the school's expectations of all students enrolled at SMG, parents provide support and cooperation as the school attempts to "educate the whole child." Policies concerning the dress and behavior of all students whenever and wherever they represent St. Maria Goretti School are essential in achieving the mission of our school.

I have read the parent-student handbook with my child(ren) and have reviewed with them the code of conduct expected of all students attending St. Maria Goretti Catholic School. I pledge my support and cooperation in working with the school administration, faculty and staff as we work together to achieve what is best for our child(ren).

_____ Parent Signature	_____ Student Signature
_____ Date	_____ Student Signature
	_____ Student Signature
	_____ Student Signature
	_____ Student Signature

***PLEASE RETURN TO THE SCHOOL OFFICE BY WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2010.***