



MARY QUEEN OF APOSTLES
SCHOOL

PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

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Dear Parents and Students,

***“What greater work is there than training the mind and
forming the habits of the young?”
St. John Chrysostom***

Welcome to Mary Queen of Apostles School! In choosing MQA, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education.

The Parent/Student Handbook reflects the policies of Mary Queen of Apostles School. Please read this document carefully and sign the attached agreement. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of Mary Queen of Apostles School during the school year.

Throughout this document, the policy of the Diocese of Greensburg is referenced. These policies have been adopted by Mary Queen of Apostles School.

The faculty and staff of Mary Queen of Apostles School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Together let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

God bless you,



Catherine M. Collett
Principal

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Mary Queen of Apostles Parent/Student Handbook

The philosophy and mission statement of Mary Queen of Apostles School are the cornerstone of our program and environment. Through our beliefs and values we determine our policies and procedures. Through our documents, we encourage our families, our students, and our staff to act and interact so that we are responsible members in a community of learners, witnesses to our faith, and reflections of Christ.

Catherine M. Collett, Principal



MARY QUEEN OF APOSTLES SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

“Christian education is intended to make our faith become living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction.”

We, at Mary Queen of Apostles School, focus on educating the total child. We stress the academic and spiritual development of each child in a Christ-centered learning community through relationships and actions that model Christian values and beliefs.

As caring professionals we provide a solid foundation in the fundamentals with a challenging and extensive curriculum evolving to meet the needs of the students in an ever-changing world. We foster social justice, instill Catholic, Christian morality, encourage an appreciation for the Catholic Church, and an integrated love of all God’s creation. We encourage service to God through service to others.

We strive to maintain high standards of conduct and heightened accountability in academics and the development of age-appropriate skills. We guide the spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social growth of children and youth. We provide a safe and nurturing environment, promoting respect for the dignity of each person and emphasizing individual responsibility.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Mary Queen of Apostles School is to form a new generation of disciples of Jesus Christ by educating the total child – developing minds, building character, and strengthening faith. In a Christ-centered learning community, we offer a solid foundation in the fundamentals with a challenging and extensive curriculum evolving to meet the needs of students in an ever-changing world. We provide a safe nurturing environment, promote respect for the dignity of each person, emphasize individual responsibility, and encourage service to others under the guidance of our patroness, Mary, the first and model disciple of her Son.

THE MISSION OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

The mission of Catholic schools within the Diocese of Greensburg is to create a Catholic Christian learning environment to prepare students for their life's journey. While parents are the first teachers, the task of our schools is to assist parents in fulfilling their responsibility as primary educators of their children. Schools challenge students to develop the Gospel values, academic mastery, spirit of community service, and global perspective that will give their lives passion and purpose.

Beliefs ~

- ❖ *Catholic schools have an impact on the moral consciousness of our society.*
- ❖ *All children can learn.*
- ❖ *Gospel values provide opportunities for students to live and proclaim the teachings of Jesus and the Church.*
- ❖ *Each individual has worth and deserves respect and dignity.*
- ❖ *Successful learning builds self-esteem.*
- ❖ *Education is to be shared by the school, the home, the student, the parishes, and the community.*
- ❖ *Learning is most effective in a safe, caring environment.*
- ❖ *Teachers and administrators are professional decision-makers who facilitate children's learning while continually learning.*
- ❖ *Change creates the need for life-long learning.*
- ❖ *High expectations directly affect performance.*
- ❖ *Excellence in education is worth the commitment of time, effort, and money through a shared responsibility of parents and parishes.*
- ❖ *An educated citizenry ensures a strong foundation for a democratic society.*
- ❖ *The Catholic school system is an important key to the development of a parish community.*

Handbook of Policies, Office of Catholic Schools, Diocese of Greensburg

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE FOR MARY QUEEN OF APOSTLES SCHOOL

Bishop of Greensburg

-The chief shepherd of the diocese, who authorizes the creation and continued operation of Catholic School.

Board of Members

-Pastors of the parishes that sponsor the School and the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, who oversee the School's mission, set policy, manage the School's business, property, and financial affairs according to the policies of the Diocese of Greensburg. A Pastor serves as President to head this governing body.

Administration

-The Principal, appointed by and accountable to the Board of Members, who serves as the educational leader of the School and oversees the faculty and staff.

-The Principal, following the Policy Handbook of the Diocese of Greensburg, assumes the responsibility for designing and directing a sound educational program and for coordinating the efforts of all the people involved in the school community in such a way as to create and foster an environment in which the Catholic faith can be learned and lived. The Principal maintains an educational climate by providing professional and spiritual growth of both staff and students.

School Advisory Council

- The SAC is an advisory group appointed by the Bishop to advise the Administration on matters of marketing, development, enrollment, and fundraising following the by-laws established by the Diocese.

NOTICE

Nothing contained in the Parent/Student Handbook is intended to, or shall be construed to, create contractual obligations, expressed or implied, on the part of the parishes, the Diocese of Greensburg, or Mary Queen of Apostles School. The contents of this handbook are subject to alteration or modification by the school or diocese as circumstances may require.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The curriculum of the Diocese of Greensburg is a living document, which is continually updated and reviewed. Our rigorous curriculum is infused with the Catholic faith and aligned with Pennsylvania state and national standards. Parents may receive a copy by contacting the school office.

ACADEMIC PLAN

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic improvement plan. The plan will be developed with support of the parent, teacher and administration. The plan will be reviewed periodically during the grading period.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to outline the acceptable use of computer equipment and systems at the diocese. These rules are in place to protect the employee and the organization. Inappropriate use exposes all of us to risks including virus attacks, compromise of network systems and services, and legal issues.

The Diocese of Greensburg Office of Catholic Schools has developed General Technology and Internet Policies to guide schools in enforcing appropriate use of available technology. The purposes of these policies are to ensure the equitable and optimal use of all technology-related equipment at the schools and to encourage the use of technology as a valuable learning tool. It is the policy of the Diocese of Greensburg Office of Catholic Schools to maintain an environment that promotes ethical and responsible technology use. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, employee or guest to engage in any activity that does not conform to the established purpose and general rules set forth in this policy.

The AUP is found online at Mary Queen of Apostles School web site, Family Resources, School Forms, Policies. An online acceptance of the policy with signatures of parents and students is required to activate all privileges involving technology both in school and online.

Publishing Student Photos and Work

- Students may be photographed or videoed for use on the school web site, Facebook page, or Twitter account.
- Students may be photographed for brochures, newsletters, and/or news reporting during the course of the year.
- Students participating in special events or competitions or receiving awards will have their photo and information sent to the local and diocesan papers and the parish bulletins.
- Students may also be photographed or captured on video for the Diocese of Greensburg.
- Permission for such is covered under the AUP on the MQA School web site. Written requests that restrict any of the above must be made to the principal.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURY

In case of an emergency concerning the health of a student, the school nurse and/or school principal or designee shall be immediately notified. The school nurse shall be primarily responsible for rendering medical assistance. If the parent, guardian, or person designated on the student's emergency card cannot be timely reached, the school nurse or school principal or designee shall decide whether hospitalization or further treatment at a medical facility is necessary.

The school office will maintain a Family Emergency/Illness Card for each student. The Family Emergency/Illness Card will be sent home in the first day envelope. It should be printed neatly and returned to school within the first three days of school. It is important for your child's safety and comfort, as well as the effective operation of the office, and that emergency information needed to locate parents is available for each child and that this information is kept up-to-date by parents.

In the case of illness during school hours, the principal or designee may send a child home after a parent or guardian has been notified and transportation arrangements have been made. Children are not permitted to call their parent/guardian or dismiss themselves. A parent/guardian must pick up the child in the school office and sign him/her out.

Parents of children who have any type of physical disorder should contact the principal, school nurse, or teachers to make them aware of the problem. All cases of head lice should be reported at once.

ACCREDITATION

Mary Queen of Apostles School is accredited through the Middle States Association Colleges and Schools.

ADMISSION INFORMATION AND RE-REGISTRATION

In order to insure equal educational opportunities in all Catholic educational programs, particularly schools of the Diocese, the following uniform guidelines are to be used in the formulation of admissions policies:

- Catholic schools, having been established and maintained out of the contributions and personal sacrifices of the Catholic citizenry, may justly give preference in admissions to Catholic children. This principle not only accords with justice but constitutes a proper accommodation to religious conscience.
- All applicants must file with the school the admission application, and when accepted, the registration materials.
- Non-Catholic students shall be admitted to a Catholic school as school circumstances permit.
- Non-Catholic school students attending a Catholic school shall be expected to attend religious activities during the school day.
- Priority in admissions shall be: Parishioners, Catholic non-parishioners, and non-Catholics.
- Children of any race, color, handicap, or national origin are eligible for admission to any Catholic school. Children of any religion are likewise eligible for admission to any Catholic school subject to the rights of Catholic children stated above.

- No Catholic school should accept pupils whose parent/guardian seeks to have them admitted in order to avoid racial integration or to avoid situations involving racial tension.
- The legal name of the student shall be used on school records and documents which are deemed official. Changes in the child's name cannot be affected by an act of the parent, but must be authorized only through official court documents. Custody arrangements or a change in the marital status of the parent has no bearing whatsoever on the legal name of the child. Requests by the parent to have the child called by a name other than the legal surname or to have that name placed on official school papers cannot be considered.
- Parents and/or guardians should be advised that they must accompany the child to school for the purpose of registration and verification of residency.
- On the date of registration to formal schooling, normally kindergarten, the following documents must be presented prior to admittance:
 - Birth certificate or notarized copy
 - Immunization record
 - If living with a guardian, residency and responsibility papers are needed, plus a conference with the home and school visitor for verification of residence.

When a student transfers to a diocesan school, a certified copy of the student's disciplinary record shall be obtained from the school from which the student is transferring. This record shall be maintained as part of the student's disciplinary record and shall be available for inspection as required by law.

Upon registration and prior to admission to the school, the parent, guardian, or person having control or charge of the student shall provide a sworn statement or affirmation stating whether the student previously was suspended or expelled from any public or private school of the Commonwealth or any other state for an offense involving weapons, alcohol or drugs; for the willful infliction of injury to another person; or for any act of violence committed on school property.

Parents and guardians shall be informed that any willful false statements concerning this registration shall be a misdemeanor of the third degree. This registration statement shall be maintained as part of the student's disciplinary record.

A Memorandum of Understanding must be signed by parents or guardians prior to admission and at the beginning of each school year. This Memorandum of Understanding pledges support for the Catholic identity and mission of the school and holds parents accountable for following the principles and policies of the school and the Catholic faith.

The following documents are needed for admission:

Preschool and Kindergarten

- Application
- Home Language Survey
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Parent Permission to Request and/or Release School Records (if applicable)
- Tuition Payment Agreement
- Notarized Copy of Birth Certificate
- Immunization Records
- Residency and Responsibility Papers (if living with a guardian)
- Family Survey

All Other Grades

- Application
- Home Language Survey
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Parent Permission to Request and/or Release School Records
- Sworn Statement Pertaining to the Prior Conduct of a Pupil Seeking Admission
- Tuition Payment Agreement
- Academic, personal, and health records (category A and B) from previous school
- Immunization and Health Record
- Residency and Responsibility Papers (if living with a guardian)
- Copy of Disciplinary Records from previous school
- Family Survey

Re-registration for Returning Students

All students currently attending Mary Queen of Apostles School must complete a re-registration process online that includes filing a re-registration form and paying a family registration fee. The re-registration process begins at the end of January with Catholic Schools Week.

Secondly, the family should attend to applying for financial aid if needed. This is done through the FACTS Financial Aid application. These are two distinct processes.

Finally, once tuition statements are sent, the tuition will be added to the family's FACTS Tuition Management account and payments will begin in July for the upcoming school year.

The following documents are needed annually:

- Family Survey
- Memorandum of Understanding
- Tuition Payment Agreement
- Understanding of Handbook Form
- Textbook Loan Form
- Emergency Card
- Other items as requested by the school

Kindergarten

Any child who reaches the age of five (5) by the start of the current school year, may be admitted to kindergarten unless there is evidence that the child is not ready to begin.

First Grade

Any child who reaches the age of six (6) by the start of the current school year, may be admitted to the first grade unless there is evidence that the child is not ready to begin.

Other Grades

Pupils who have attended another school and wish to transfer to a school in the diocese of Greensburg will be accepted and placed according to their previous school records. The final placement decision rests with the school principal.

Students with Disabilities

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Greensburg desire to be as inclusive as possible in welcoming all students for whom they can provide an appropriate program.

Steps taken when a student with disabilities wishes to attend a Catholic school:

- The principal must review all previous school records (academic, social, medical, etc.).
- The principal interviews the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the child to assess the child's potential for success in the school environment.
- The principal consults with other knowledgeable persons to determine whether the school is an appropriate placement for the child.
- If the principal determines the school is an appropriate placement, the parent(s)/guardian(s) are notified and they can fill out an application form.

During Public School Strikes

During a strike or shutdown in the public school district, parent(s)/guardian(s) with children attending such a public school may make application for their children.

If the application is approved according to the admissions policy of the Diocese and the standards set forth by school administration, the children are admitted to the school. In most cases, all financial aid will have already been distributed, so the availability of financial aid is extremely limited. Parents are required to pay 2 months of tuition in advance before students will be admitted.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Advisory Council is made up of members (both parents and parishioners) appointed by the Bishop to serve the school along with the school Principal and Board of Trust Administrators to enhance our ability to market the school, increase the school enrollment, provide support for the School's development functions, and assist with the school's financial planning.

ALLERGY POLICY

Mary Queen of Apostles School recognizes that life threatening food allergies are an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with food allergies. In order to minimize the incidence of life threatening allergic reactions, Mary Queen of Apostles School will maintain a system-wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions and maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student(s) whose parent/guardian, and physicians have informed the school in writing that the student(s) has a potentially life threatening allergy.

ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Mary Queen of Apostles Athletic Program provides extra-curricular activities for students to participate at a competitive level under the Diocesan CYO guidelines and W.P.I.A.L. Middle School through Greensburg Central Catholic. The student will be expected to maintain acceptable academic achievement in relationship to his/her ability. The student will be expected to maintain standard behavior throughout the school day. Serious offenses, as described in this Handbook will be handled on an individual basis at the discretion of the principal. Any student absent from school on a particular day may not attend practice or play in a game that day. Parents will be contacted if students do not meet the above expectations. Mary Queen of Apostles will follow all Diocesan and W.P.I.A.L. policies pertaining to the athletic program.

Athletic Programs Offered

Fall	Diocesan Cross Country	Grades K-8
	Diocesan Girls Basketball	Grades 3-8
Winter	Diocesan Boys Basketball	Grades 3-8
	Diocesan Girls Cheer	Grades 4-8
Spring	Diocesan Girls Volleyball	Grades 3-8

Limits to Participation

- Students cannot participate in sports when a medical excuse limiting physical activity in physical education class and/or sports is filed. Sports activity, including practice and games may resume when the attending doctor reinstates the child and lifts the limitations.
- Students who are not in class on the day of a sporting event or practice, may not attend the event or practice. Also, students who are sent home sick from school may not attend an event or practice.

ATTENDANCE

The Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools requires that school aged pupils enrolled in the schools of the Diocese attend school regularly in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The educational program offered by the diocese is predicated upon the presence of the pupil and requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation.

Our philosophy is one that stresses to teachers, pupils and parents the importance of regular school attendance. It is the Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools' belief that only through regular school attendance can students progress academically at a successful rate. Furthermore, since attendance is part of a pupil's cumulative record, it is important that good school attendance habits be established for later years when pupils seek employment. When employers seek reference materials on past students who are prospective employees, attendance information is requested on a high-priority basis. A good record of attendance and punctuality is an excellent recommendation for future school and career endeavors.

In addition, the Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools recognizes that a strong relationship exists between good school attendance and academic achievement. The learning experiences that occur in the classroom environment are considered to be the most meaningful and essential components of the instructional process. Class absences disrupt instructional continuity and decrease direct teacher-student contact time. Absences limit opportunities for classroom interaction and direct participation with teacher and student.

Therefore, it is the underlying purpose of this policy to:

- Provide an educational program, predicated upon the presence of the pupil, which requires continuity of instruction and classroom participation.
- Help students develop a sense of responsibility, discipline and good work habits.
- Maintain close communication and cooperation between home and school to encourage and sustain regular school attendance.
- Improve students' opportunities for academic and social accomplishment.

School Responsibility

In order to meet their responsibility for maintaining attendance rolls and accounting for absences, the principal and her/his staff will be responsible for the following procedures:

- Keeping an accurate record of all students assigned at the beginning of the school year, new entrants, withdrawals, and reentries.
- Ensuring a school session which conforms to the State Board of Regulations.
- Daily recording and reporting of absences by homeroom and/or class period.
- Maintaining cumulative records of each student's absences.
- Informing parents of students' absences. The principal or her/his designed shall report student absences at ten-day (10) cumulative periods to parents by phone contact or written notification.
- Issuing written notice to a parent or guardian who fails to comply with the compulsory attendance statute that such infraction of the law will be prosecuted.
- Identifying and counseling students with irregular attendance patterns.
- Ensuring that students returning from an absence have an opportunity to make up the work they missed.
- Making provisions for an accumulation of class cuts or excessive tardies into equivalent days of absence.
- Taking disciplinary measures in cases of excessive tardies and absences from school or class.
- Developing a positive incentive program appropriate to student age and maturity levels to foster a positive attitude toward school attendance.

Parent Responsibility

The Compulsory Attendance holds parents or guardians legally responsible for the regular school attendance of their child. In addition to the legal ramifications, the Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools recognizes that parental attitude is a factor which influences the regularity of school attendance. As part of their responsibility, parents are expected to provide the school with a written excuse for their child's absence within three (3) days of his/her return to school. If a written excuse is not received by the school within three days of a student's return from absence, the administration will contact the parent/guardian as a reminder that a written excuse is required for the absence to be lawful. If the excuse is not sent in within three more days, the absence will become permanently unlawful and cannot be changed. After five (5) days of continuous absence or after 15 days of cumulative absence, the principal or her/his designee may require the parent to verify the student's illness by a written statement from a physician for the purpose of issuing an excused temporary absence. We request a doctors excuse be provided for any appointment, or if during the illness, the student is seen by a physician regardless of the length of the absence. Only written/printed communications are acceptable as excuses. Telephone calls are not used to record an excused absence. Absences are listed as unexcused in PowerSchool until a written/printed excuse is filed and accepted.

Student Responsibility

Students are expected to report to school each day on time. In the event of an absence, students must bring an excuse from their parent or guardian upon returning to school the first day after an absence. All excuses from parents or guardians concerning absences or tardiness should contain the following information:

- Date note is written
- Name and grade of the student
- Date of absence or tardiness
- Signature of parent or guardian

The student is responsible for making up all assignments and tests missed during an absence from school. The student is normally permitted a week (one day for each day missed) to make up work missed. It is the student's responsibility to obtain the assignments and return them to the individual teacher at the time designated.

Excusals from Instruction

Certain children may be excused from attendance in accordance with diocesan policy. The following cases of out-of-school instructions are permitted upon the approval of the Superintendent for Catholic Schools.

- Homebound instruction for enrolled pupils who are temporarily unable to attend school for medical reasons.
- Individualized out-of-school instruction for students unable to attend regularly. Tutoring and programs for exceptional students may be types of individualized instruction.
- Work study or career exploration programs approved by the principal that are conducted under school auspices and proper supervision.
- Work release program with student in school a portion of the day.
- A 12th grade student taking college courses part-time while continuing in high school the rest of the school day.
- Graduating students may be counted present for not more than three (3) days for supervised commencement preparation.
- Educational, school sponsored experiences held at other sites which are extensions of classroom instruction (i.e., field trips and school sponsored educational travel/study programs).

Students who have received the Superintendent's permission to participate in such programs are considered to be in attendance.

Excused Temporary Absences

The Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools recognizes a number of specific reasons for which a child may be excused from school for all or part of a school day. These include:

- Observance of religious holidays.
- Religious Instruction-This is restricted by law to a maximum of 36 hours per school year.
- Educational trips, not school sponsored.
- Take Your Child to Work – company sponsored program

Upon receipt of a written request from the parents of the pupils involved, pupils may be granted excused temporary absences from school to participate in an educational trip during the school term when such trip is so determined by the school principal to service an educational purpose. The following conditions must be followed:

- Educational trips will be considered for approval if the school principal determines that such a trip will be of educational significance to the student. In order for the school principal to make such a determination, the parent shall provide a written request for excusal which shall indicate the days to be missed, the destination of the trip, the reason why the trip could not be taken on days when school is not in session, and an outline of the educational value of the trip.
 - The form for this request, Educational Trip Request Form, is found online in School Forms, Attendance section.

- The total number of days granted for an educational trip, not school sponsored, will be based upon the student's attendance and academic record.
- Unless some emergency arises, such requests shall be made at least two (2) weeks prior to the date of the trip.
- Unless some unusual family circumstances exist, such trips shall not be approved during the final two (2) weeks of the school term.
- If more than one child in a family will be taking the trip, the request for all the children shall be included in the request made to the school principal.
- Students are granted the privilege of making up all assignments and tests missed during the excused absence. However, the responsibility for making up this work lies with the student. Appointments should be made with the teachers to find out what work is to be made up. The student assumes the responsibility for completing this work within two (2) weeks after her/his return.
- Take Your Child to Work day is a program instituted by companies with a detailed agenda of events that will serve the child in exploring careers.
 - Students engaged in the out-of-school program, Take Your Child to Work Day, shall be counted an excused absence if the program is sponsored, planned, and properly supervised by a certificated employee with corporate sponsorship. The student will return with a completed description of the day and what was learned and experienced. Requests for permission to attend must be given to the principal on the company's letterhead announcing the educational experience.
 - Parents who elect to create an educational experience at work through their own initiative must complete the Take Your Child to Work Form found online under School Forms, Attendance. Without this form and plan for the day's learning, the absence is considered unexcused.
- Health Care: Absence for a portion of the school day may be excused for medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged after school hours.
- Illness and other urgent reasons: This is the most common reason, or set of reasons, for temporary absence from schools. In general, absences for the following reasons should be excused:
 - Illness or recovery from an accident
 - Quarantine of the home
 - Death in the family
 - Court appearance
 - Family emergency (unavoidable)

Unexcused or Unlawful Absences

The Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools defines an unexcused absence as the absence of a pupil due to parental neglect, illegal employment, or truancy. Unlawful absence is unexcused absence for all pupils under seventeen (17) years if age, the present time in the compulsory attendance age law.

First Offense

A first offense consists of three or more days of absence without lawful excuse.

- Written Notice to Parents: The school's official notice of absence to parents shall be served in person or by certified, registered or regular mail to the parent's home as soon as a pupil has three (3) days, or their equivalent, of unlawful absence.

Closing of first offense: The first offense is closed at the end of three calendar days after serving the notice or upon the return of the pupil to school within the three days following the serving of the notice.

Second Offense

After the first offense is closed, the next session during the school year that the student is unlawfully absent becomes a second offense and requires the serving of a warrant on the parent through the office of a magistrate. The serving of the warrant closes the second offense. Each succeeding session of unlawful absences by the same pupil becomes another second offense and the same procedure is repeated. The Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools official notice of absence to parents is not serviced in second offense cases. The notice served after the first three (3) days of unlawful absence is adequate for the school year.

The following list includes, but is not limited to, examples of unexcused or unlawful absences:

- Truancy
- Parental neglect
- Illegal employment
- Pupils who run away from home
- Shopping
- Trips not approved in advance

Corrective measures for excessive absence or truancy may include counseling, parental conference, internal or external suspension. When student attendance behavior is not modified by less severe disciplinary measures, repeat offenses can result in enforced withdrawal from a course or expulsion from school.

Early Dismissal

All students are expected to be in school every day for the entire day. A student may be dismissed from school early only with the approval of the principal or her/his designee. Each principal shall set up procedures to validate requests for early dismissal to assure that children are released only for proper reasons and into proper hands. No student may be released into the care of a person who is not known or on the basis of an invalidated telephone call.

Medical and dental appointments during school hours are discouraged. Children of estranged parents may be released only upon the request of the parent whom the court holds directly responsible for the child and who is the parent or guardian registered on the school record.

Tardiness

Students are expected to be punctual in reporting to school. Students who arrive late to school are to report to the office with an excuse for their tardiness. Chronic unexcused tardiness may be converted into the equivalent days of unlawful absence. Principals should bring to the attention of the parents, these cases of frequent tardies to school. All tardies are to be recorded in the student's attendance record.

Compulsory School Age

"Compulsory school age" shall mean the period of a child's life from the time the child enters school, which may be no later than at the age of eight (8) years, until the age of 17 years or graduation from high school, whichever occurs first.

BOARD OF TRUST ADMINISTRATORS

The Board of Trust Administrators is comprised of all, or a subset of the pastors of parishes that are in proximity to an elementary school. The members of the Board of Trust Administrators select one of the members to be the Chairman.

Board members consider the effects of any action upon students, employees, suppliers, families, and parishioners of the Trust and communities in which offices or other establishments of the Trust or an affiliated Trust are located, and all other pertinent factors.

BUCKLEY AMENDMENT [FERPA]

Mary Queen of Apostles School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) in regard to student records and the rights of non-custodial parents. It is the responsibility of the parents to share any official custodial information determined through the courts. Official custodial agreements will be kept in a confidential file in the office of the principal. In the absence of any court document, the school will view each parent as having full legal custody of his/her child. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, non-custodial parents have the right to receive records about their child's academic progress or lack thereof.

A non-custodial parent is that parent who does not have primary custody as determined by a court of law.

BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

Prohibiting Harassment, Intimidation, Hazing, or Bullying

The Office for Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Greensburg is committed to providing a caring, friendly, safe, and respectful environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and visitors of our schools. A safe, secure, and respectful educational environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards and build appropriate relationships with others. Acts of harassment, hazing, intimidation, and bullying (including cyberbullying) are unacceptable behaviors and are prohibited in our schools.

The purpose of this policy is to assist the schools of the Diocese of Greensburg in our goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence and other similar disruptive behavior. Administration, faculty, staff, and volunteers are to demonstrate appropriate behavior by treating others with civility and respect, and being aware of and not tolerating harassment, intimidation, hazing, and bullying. If incidents do occur, students should be able to report and know that the inappropriate behavior will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

General Statement of Policy

- An act of harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying (which collectively shall be referred to in this document as "bullying") by either an individual student or group of students is expressly prohibited on school property; at a school-sponsored activity or event off school property; on a school bus; on the way to and/or from school; or off school grounds if these actions are intended to and/or do adversely affect the safety and well-being of students while in school (including cyberbullying). This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in such an act but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's unacceptable behavior.
- No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the schools of the Diocese of Greensburg shall permit, condone, or tolerate such acts.

- Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
- The principal (or designee) will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will discipline or take appropriate action against any individual who is found to have violated this policy.

Definitions

- Bullying involves conduct by a person, including verbal conduct, that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or psychological well-being.
- Harassment, hazing, intimidation, and bullying are any acts, words or other behaviors, by an individual or group against another individual or group, characterized by:
 - Intent to harm
 - Intensity and duration over a period of time
 - An interpersonal relationship where there is an imbalance of power, not mutual or intentional provocation by the victim
 - Inflicting physical or emotional harm or discomfort or damage to the person's reputation and/or relationships; and
 - A level so severe, persistent, or pervasive that an intimidating or threatening educational environment is created or the orderly operation of the school is substantially disrupted.

Bullying can take many forms including but not limited to: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendo, demeaning comments, cartoon drawing, graffiti, pranks, gestures, staring/leering, physical attacks, flashing a weapon, physical restraining, threats, taunting/ridiculing, stalking, malicious teasing, name calling, relationship undermining, social isolation or exclusion, other written, verbal and/or published items including cyberbullying, destroying/damaging property, or other physical actions.

Responsibilities of Administrators, Supervisors, Teachers and Others

To the extent that a person has supervision of other persons, activities and environments, each administrator, principal, teacher, aide or volunteer shall:

- Have the responsibility for maintaining a work place, work area, learning area and/or activity area free of harassment, intimidation, hazing, and bullying. Teachers should establish a positive, friendly, and trusting relationship with the class and each individual student. The best results are obtained through a combination of generous verbal praise or other social reinforcements for positive activities and consistent negative consequences for aggressive, rule-violating behavior.
- Have the responsibility to ensure that all information concerning the policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation, hazing, or bullying is disseminated to all subordinates, to all families, and to all students. This information may be in the form of rules, regulations, orders, procedures, policies, or other written or oral directives. All parties are to be instructed as to the full meaning and application of all such directives.
- Have the responsibility to be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that may lead to or constitute bullying and immediately report to his or her immediate supervisor: any actions viewed by him or her which, in his or her opinion, may be construed as falling within the definition of bullying as contained within the policy; and/or any instances, reports or allegations of bullying which come to his or her attention.

- Have the responsibility, upon receiving an allegation of bullying, to complete the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation school investigating form.
- Document incidents in the Diocesan PowerSchool student management system for the purpose of program evaluation and planning, as directed by the Superintendent and the Office for Catholic Schools.

Responsibilities of Students

To the extent that students have influence with other persons, their own words and actions, and school activities and environments, each student shall:

- Respect and obey all teachers, staff, and volunteers
- Speak and act appropriately
- Respect other students in word and action
- Respect the school property and the property of others
- Not harass, intimidate, haze, or bully others
- Recognize peer conflict, report problems, and work to resolve conflict
- Be responsible for protecting the rights of others
- Accept responsibility for her/his own actions as well as the actions of a group when participating in such behavior
- Be truthful and candid if observing behaviors that could be a form of bullying
- Be courageous to report behaviors to a teacher or administrator
- Make it a point to include all students who are easily left out.

Reporting Procedures

Any student, employee, staff member, aide or volunteer who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or any such person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged act(s) immediately to the building principal (or designee). A student may report bullying anonymously. The Office for Catholic Schools encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the reporting form available from the building principal. An oral report shall be considered an official report and must be documented.

- The building principal (or designee) is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of bullying at the building level. If the report is given verbally, the principal (or designee) shall reduce it into written form using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation school investigation form. This form is located in the appendix of this document. (600 A)
- All other members of the school community, including parents/guardians, students, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy to a school employee. While submission of the report form is not required, it is encouraged. The Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation reporting form is used for reporting and is found in the appendix of this document.
- Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant's or reporter's: grades, educational environment, future employment, work assignments or work environment.
- The school and the Office for Catholic Schools respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witness(es) as much as possible, consistent with the school's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations. Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or as confidential investigative data, and will not be disclosed except as required by law.

- Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on an anonymous report, but only when validated.
- If the complaint concerns alleged conduct by the Principal, the report form shall be delivered to the Superintendent.

Investigation Procedures

- Upon receipt of a report or complaint that alleges harassment, intimidation, hazing or bullying, the building principal (or designee) shall undertake a prompt, thorough and complete investigation of the alleged incident in as confidential a manner as possible. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation shall be documented using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation school investigation form and may include other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator. The building principal (or designee) may take immediate steps, at her/his discretion, to protect the complainant, student(s), or others, pending completion of an investigation of bullying, consistent with applicable law.
- Whether a particular action(s) or incident(s) constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and the surrounding circumstances.
- The building principal (or designee) is not obligated to disclose to a victim any educational or personnel data, including any disciplinary action taken against an alleged perpetrator. To the extent permitted by law, the principal will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student(s) involved in a bullying incident and the remedial action taken, based on a substantiated report.
- A full written report shall be completed by the principal or the principal's designee upon completion of the investigation. Such report may include, but shall not be limited to:
 - Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of the reporting or aggrieved party.
 - Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of the accused party.
 - Written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) of all witnesses.
 - Diocese of Greensburg Schools Harassment, Intimidation, Hazing, and Bullying Investigation Form
 - Factual findings and recommendations.
 - All written and/or transcribed verbal statement(s) shall be signed by the person offering such statements.

Discipline and Remedial Action

The response to students who commit one or more acts of bullying should be determined based on the totality of the circumstances. In all cases, the school should attempt to actively involve parents/guardians in the remediation of the behavior(s) concerned.

- Initiate immediate talks with the bully or bullies to include:
 - Documenting involvement of participation
 - Sending a clear, strong message that the behavior is not acceptable
 - Warning that future behavior will be closely monitored
 - Warning that additional negative consequences will be administered if the behavior does not stop
 - Immediate consequences may be warranted for inappropriate actions in their first occurrence
- Talk with the victim and his/her parents/guardians to include:
 - Documenting specifics of the incident

- Providing information about the plan of action to be taken by school personnel and parents/guardians to deal with the behavior
- Encouraging the immediate reporting of any new episodes or attempts to school personnel
- In determining the appropriate response to students who commit one or more acts of bullying, school administrators should consider the following factors:
 - The development, maturity levels, and/or special learning needs of the parties involved
 - The levels of harm
 - The surrounding circumstances
 - The nature of the behaviors
 - Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior
 - The relationship between the parties involved
 - The context in which the alleged incidents occurred

It is only after meaningful consideration of these factors that an appropriate consequence should be determined, consistent with the diocesan policies and school procedures.

- Upon completion of the investigation, the building principal (or designee) will take appropriate action. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited behavior. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students who commit acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions, referral to school and outside resources, detentions, up to and including suspension or expulsion. In summary, action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the applicable statutory authority, and the school and diocesan policies and regulations.
- The parents/guardians concerned should be contacted. Depending on the situation, meetings can be held together with parents/guardians of both sides, or to minimize tensions, meetings can be held with each family separately. To support the teacher convening this meeting, the school psychologist, guidance counselor, principal or assistant principal may be invited to attend.

Protection for those Reporting Incidents

The Diocese of Greensburg, Office for Catholic Schools prohibits intimidation, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged bullying, any person who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation; or any person who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement may be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the person who reported the incident. Disciplinary action will be in accordance with diocesan policies, procedures, and agreements, and may range from positive behavior intervention up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

False Accusations

Students, school employees, visitors or volunteers who are found to have falsely accused another of bullying shall receive consequences in accordance with diocesan policies, procedures, and agreements. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement may be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the person who was falsely accused. Consequences shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, and may range from positive behavior intervention up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is when someone is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by a peer using information and communication technologies.

The policies and procedures herein related to other forms of bullying, and in the Diocese of Greensburg Schools Technology Resource Acceptable Use Policy, also apply to cyberbullying. However, because the motives, methods, profile, and demographics of cyberbullies are varied and sometimes different from the traditional bully, the solutions and prevention messages must address their special issues.

The schools have a valid concern and legal obligation to maintain discipline and protect their students while in their care in the classroom, on school grounds, and at school-sponsored activities. However, if cyberbullying originates or occurs off school grounds and outside of school hours and does not directly impact the school itself, schools have limited authority to react to cyberbullying. Each school's Technology Resource Acceptable Use Policy, signed by the student and parent, must include a provision reserving the school's right to discipline the student for actions taken off school grounds if these actions are intended to and/or do adversely affect the safety and well-being of students while in school. Documentation on how the incidents affect the school should be kept.

Children should be counseled to immediately tell a responsible adult. Depending on what they are doing, how they are doing it, and if repeated, cyberbullies' actions might escalate from annoyance, to bullying, or to the school's disciplinary code, to criminal acts.

If the cyberbullying is repeated and threatening, the victim and the parents/guardians should contact the school so the situation can be monitored in school for the safety of all. School authorities must respond to allegations of cyberbullying:

- By gathering information using the Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation school investigation form and procedures detailed in this policy, including the telecommunication method used and the effect of the threat at school. Collecting and preserving electronic evidence is important to facilitate the investigation and any eventual prosecution. Do not: 1) install or allow to be installed any programs; 2) remove or allow to be removed any programs; or 3) take or allow other remedial action on the involved computer or communication device during this process. These actions may adversely affect the investigation and any eventual prosecution.
- In one or more of the following ways:
 - The context in which the alleged incidents occurred
 - Contact law enforcement if the victim is in danger of physical harm
 - Contact both sets of parents/guardians and try to mediate the situation and reiterate applicable policy
 - Institute an educational and awareness program to help stop further cyberbullying by students, and to help educate parents/guardians about the problem

Policy Dissemination, Prevention Programs, and Curriculum

Information regarding the policy against bullying shall be incorporated into the school's employee in-service program and policies.

It is the responsibility of the administration and staff to ensure that each child is made aware and understands definitions, conditions, and examples of bullying. The schools will provide annual education and information to students and parents/guardians regarding bullying, including information regarding the Office for Catholic Schools' policy prohibiting bullying.

Intervention programs may also be delivered by Intervention Specialists, Guidance Counselors, SAP Liaisons, and/or professional school personnel.

CALENDAR

A school calendar listing all holidays, vacations, special events, and conferences is given to each family and is posted on the school web site. General information is found online including start times, snow days, dates of each quarter, report cards, and mid-term. The information is listed below the monthly calendar. The calendar is a working document that will be changed to include annually held events. A more detailed, activities and events calendar is found on our web site. A sports calendar and the lunch menu is also found online. A year-long calendar is also found online. It is sent to all districts and families at the start of the school year. It is included with the tuition statement.

CARPOOLS

Parents may elect to carpool to events. If parents are taking their own children, no action is needed. If parents are taking other families' children as arranged by those parents, no action is needed.

It is the policy of the school that for school events, students take a bus provided by the school. In cases where a bus is not provided, parents are responsible for getting their child to the location of the event.

In the event that carpooling is needed and arranged by the school, a Volunteer Driver Form is required and two adults are to be present in the car.

CELL PHONES and WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY

Cell Phones

Students at Mary Queen of Apostles School may have a cell phone on premises during the day and for extra-curricular activities and clubs as requested by the parent(s). A letter is sent to the parents from the principal with the direction and conditions that are to be followed for the phone to be allowed in school. Cell phones are permitted for emergency and educational purposes. Texting, photography, videography, messaging, accessing social media, phone conversations, and other such forms of communication are not permitted.

If you feel your child needs a cell phone, one may be brought to school at your own risk following this protocol. The parent(s) send a written note to the principal requesting that a device be brought to school. Upon principal approval, a letter will be mailed home giving permission and containing all the rules regarding this privilege.

On field trips, teachers have cell phones. Cell phones restrictions apply on field trips. Exceptions to this are considered if permitted by the host site and requested by the teacher.

Conditions for having a cell phone or other communication device are detailed here.

- The cell phone must be kept in the school locker, in a book bag, and turned off upon entry to the school until dismissal. If the homeroom teacher would prefer the phones are kept in the classroom, that protocol will be followed instead. Another option available to a school is to have cell phones kept in the school office.
- It is never to be on the student during the school day beginning and ending with homeroom periods, in a desk, in a classroom, at lunch/recess, or during arrival/dismissal.
- It may not be carried around during the day.

- The cell phone may not be given to other students to use.
- It may not be used at lunch or recess or taken to the restroom.
- This is not a way for parents to check in on their child for any reason. The land line phones are available for this.
- A cell phone carried with the permission of the principal can then be used after school with the knowledge and consent of the supervising teacher, coach, or club moderator.
- Any student carrying or accessing his/her phone during the day without the explicit consent of a teacher, for educational purposes will have an in-school suspension, which is recorded in the discipline log.
- An in-school suspension will be issued for first and all offenses. Continued infractions may result in a loss of privileges and further disciplinary actions.

Other technologies fall into the cell phone rules. These include but are not limited to: iPads, iPhones, iPods, Droids, gaming devices, wearable technology and those under development. If you are unsure, please call the principal. Students may not use wearable technology, pager, PDA, e-book, or portable music/game device in school. The school is not responsible for the devices. If bus drivers/districts allow their use, the student and family assume the responsibility for use and risk. If the use of the device causes a bus discipline referral, the continued use will be evaluated.

Wearable Technology

Students at Mary Queen of Apostles School wear technology such as FitBit, etc. These devices do not support texting unless a phone is on and near the wearer (and that is not permitted) or Internet searches. Apple Watches and the like, that do support texting or Internet searches are not permitted.

Wearing such devices will result in an in-school suspension, which is recorded in the discipline log. The device can be collected from the principal as arrangements can be made.

CHEATING

Cheating of any type will not be tolerated. Cheating is recorded as “incomplete” rather than a zero. The work must be completed and the incomplete replaced with a score. Violations of cheating through any means, copying others work, using technology, or plagiarism will be addressed with consequences ranging from detentions through suspensions. Multiple violations may result in disenrollment.

CHILD ABUSE AND IMMUNITY LAWS

It is important to remember that “child abuse” is not limited to sexual abuse alone. It includes inflicting or creating an imminent risk of physical injury, mental injury, sexual abuse, or harmful physical neglect. A “child” is any individual who is under the age of 18.

Child abuse can be one of several different things:

- Non-accidental *physical injury* that causes severe pain, or that significantly impairs the child’s physical functioning, even temporarily;
- Non-accidental clinically-diagnosable *mental injury* that renders the child chronically and severely anxious, agitated, depressed, socially withdrawn, psychotic, unable to perform age-appropriate developmental and social tasks, or in reasonable fear that his or her life or safety is threatened;

- Any type of *sexual abuse* or *sexual exploitation* (such as inducing a child to engage in sexual acts or to be photographed in simulating sexual acts, even if the child “consents” to the acts); or
- Serious *physical neglect* which endangers a child’s life or development or impairs the child’s functioning, but which does not arise solely from the financial inability of the parents to provide adequate housing, clothing and medical care. Child abuse also occurs when an individual places a child in imminent risk of serious physical injury or sexual abuse or exploitation.

Perpetrators

A perpetrator of child abuse can be a:

- child’s parent;
- spouse or former spouse of the parent;
- paramour or former paramour of the parent;
- person 14 years of age or older responsible for the welfare of a child or having direct contact with children as an employee of child care services, a school, or through a program, activity or service, such as a baby sitter or day care staff person;
- individual residing in the same home as the child who is at least 14 years of age;
- relative who is 18 years of age or older who does not reside in the same home as the child, but is related within the third degree of consanguinity or affinity by birth or adoption to the child; or
- an individual 18 years of age or older who engages a child in severe forms of trafficking in persons or sex trafficking, as those terms are defined under section 103 of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (114 Stat. 1466, 22 U.S.C. § 7102).

A perpetrator of child abuse for failure to act can be a:

- child’s parent;
- spouse or former spouse of the parent;
- paramour or former paramour of the parent;
- person 18 years of age or older who is responsible for the child’s welfare or who resides in the same home as the child.

Mandated reporters do not have to determine whether or not the person meets the definition of perpetrator in order to make a report.

Mandated Reporters

Mandated reporters are those people who are required by law to report suspected child abuse. Mandated reporters are held to a higher standard of responsibility and may receive serious consequences for not reporting suspected abuse.

All employees and volunteers who have identified, suspected, or self-reported child abuse by any person should immediately report the incident to ChildLine at **1-800-932-0313** and then complete the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania CY 47 form.

This form is located in the appendix of this document. (600 C)

After the report is made to ChildLine, the staff person or volunteer may discuss the ChildLine call with his or her supervisor, but the reporting individual must then notify the Bishop Delegate's Office of the mandated report in writing, via a copy of the CY 47 form.

The Managing Director of Catholic Charities serves as the Bishop's delegate for matters of clergy and church personnel sexual misconduct. The Director of Human Resources serves as the safe environment coordinator.

Among the occupations specifically listed in Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) as mandated reporters are many associated with Catholic institutions:

- Clergy, teachers, day-care personnel, social service workers, school administrators, school nurses, foster-care workers, health care personnel and mental health workers.
- Other types of Church personnel who should be considered mandated reporters are parish and school administrative personnel, music ministers, child-care personnel, youth ministers, athletic coaches, food service personnel, classroom aides and playground monitors.
- Non-paid and voluntary personnel who perform services for the Church should also consider themselves to be mandated reporters if they come into contact with children during the course of their volunteer Church work.

A mandated reporter need not make a first-hand observation of the suspected child abuse victim. Second-hand reports of abuse must be reported to the proper authorities if the mandated reporter has "reasonable cause to suspect" that child abuse has occurred.

Permissive Reporter

Permissive Reporters are individuals who are encouraged to report suspected child abuse, although not required by law.

Reporting

Mandated reporters are required to make a report of suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse under any of the following circumstances:

- They come into contact with the child in the course of employment, occupation, and practice of a profession or through a regularly scheduled program activity or service.
- They are directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child, or are affiliated with an agency, institution, organization, school, regularly established church, or religious organization or other entity that is directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or training of the child.
- A person makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that an identifiable child is the victim of abuse.
- An individual 14 years of age or older makes a specific disclosure to the mandated reporter that the individual has committed child abuse.

It is not required that the child come before the mandated reporter in order to make a report of suspected child abuse nor are they required to identify the person responsible for the child abuse to make a report of suspected child abuse.

Reporting is made to ChildLine either electronically at www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis or by calling 1-800-932-0313. If an oral report was made to ChildLine, a report of suspected child abuse (CY 47) must also be completed and forwarded to the county children and youth agency within 48 hours after making the report.

COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL

Communication between school and family is vital. You should expect a response to any communication within one or two days of sending/requesting communication. We have teachers

who do not report daily and some that work part-time. We also have professional development opportunities that our teachers attend that take them out of the buildings. Illness can also be a reason a staff member would be delayed in a response. *However, if you do not, please contact the site offices: FRS 724.335.5911 or GS 724.339.4411 so that the communication is noted and a response provided.* The following are examples of home/school communications:

Notes to teachers	Notes to principal and office staff
School web site	School online calendars
Phone calls to report child(ren) absent	Excuses for tarries
Excuses for absences	Early dismissal notes
Sending lunch money	Automated absence notification
Bus discipline notices	Automated negative lunch balance notification
Medical forms	Athletic forms and fees
Permission forms and fees	Fundraiser orders and SCRIP orders
Conference requests	PowerSchool Daily Bulletin
Emails to teachers, principal, office staff	

- *While communication is important, unscheduled visit which interrupt teaching and class supervision is not acceptable.*
- It is very important that there be good communication between the parent and teacher. Parents may contact the teacher to schedule a phone conference or meeting with the teacher. Please send a note or email to the teacher.
- Home/school communication should be addressed to the person for whom it is intended. To ensure proper handling of orders, forms, etc. brought from home, envelopes should be used as needed and be marked with the contents.
- Students may come to the office phone with permission from their teacher for emergencies and illness. Students should not use the phone to get physical education clothes, lunches, homework, projects, money, etc. Organization and responsibility are learned through practice and accountability. *While we allow the calls, we do not recommend bringing the missing items except for exceptional reasons.*
- Students may not use a school phone or teacher's cell phone after regular school hours unless it is cleared through the office and the child is sent by the teacher.
- Two parent/teacher conferences are scheduled each year for the first quarter. Notification of conference time will be sent prior to these meeting. Additional conferences are held as needed and scheduled among parents/teachers/students upon request.
- In cases where the child does not reside with both parents, both parents are able to receive school information. This is done by providing the school with a mailing address and an email address for the parent that does not have physical custody. Parents have the right to see their child's records and communicate with the teacher. If a court order restricts this, it is the parent's responsibility to provide a copy of the order to the principal.

PowerSchool and School Messenger

PowerSchool and the Parent Portal provide parents Preschool-8 with a user name and password for accessing the Parent Portal. Parents can view the Daily Bulletin, attendance, grades, missing or late assignments, and lunch/snack transactions with balances. Parents can also set up alerts to be sent notifications of grades, automatic notices from Daily Bulletin, and notice of attendance information. Students in grades 4-8 may request access to their grades with an annual username and password. This changes annually for students.

- Parents new to MQA must create a user name and password and link each child in the school to their account. Once an account is created, it is good from year to year.
- School Messenger is a part of PowerSchool and is used for emergency alerts, general communication, and delays/closings/and early dismissals for weather.
- All school communications from the main office will be sent via email, text, and/or phone using School Messenger. **It is imperative that all staff know about changes to email addresses and any cell/telephone numbers.**
- Messages to the cell phones requires the owner to complete the Telephone Consumer Protection Act Compliance Form. This is found on our web site under School Forms, Policies. If your cell is not receiving texts from the school, type Y to 675-87.
- Events will be posted on PowerSchool's Daily Bulletin, which is also part of this system.

Email

Email is the communication of choice for announcements, updates, and general information.

- Teachers do not have access to School Messenger, so emails are sent from their diocesan Outlook account.
- Communications attached to emails are often in pdf format, meaning you will need to have the free program, Adobe Acrobat Reader to open the attachments.
- Contact your email provider or Internet service provider and request that emails from @mqaschool.org be sent through. Because they are emailed to everyone, ISP's think the messages from school are spam.

Web Site

The main communication for the school community is the MQA web site at www.mqaschool.org.

The search feature of our web site is excellent.

- All routine events, activities, and special events are posted on the school's Activities and Events Calendar, or the Athletics Calendar at www.mqaschool.org. Both calendars can be set to different views so just a particular club, or events, or sport can be seen. The Lunch Menu is also on the web site. If you do not have Internet access, please contact the school offices.
- The Family Resources section of our web site contains sub menus for accessing all school forms, maps, policies, and general information including supply lists for each grade. These things appear under School Forms. Peruse this section.
- The Family Resources section also has a sub menu noted Student Resources. This page is a link to all the online access and sites we use at school.
- The Handbook and Uniform Policy is found in this section.
- The calendars are found here.
- A section for Volunteering is found in this area.
- Information on Fundraising and Tuition Credit is found in this section of the web site.
- The Admissions menu can be accessed to re-register for next school year and for information on financial aid applications.
- The Activities menu provides access to all clubs, athletics, and competitions at MQA.

School Directory

Mary Queen of Apostles School has an electronic school directory. While it isn't published, it is made available in parts as follows:

1. By default your child's name, phone, home address, and email is provided to each teacher,
2. Names and email and phone to The School Community Group
3. Name and email to our school photographer
4. And, if your child is in grade 6-8, that same information is shared with St. Joseph HS.

If there is information you would prefer NOT be shared, please send your request to both the GS school office and the FRS school office staff and the principal by the last school day in August. All staff members should be made aware of the request and not just the office and homeroom teacher.

Microsoft Office 365

Students may use online tools, specific to our school and diocese, Microsoft 365. The students may need to register for these tools using the parent email or a student account. Teachers using Office 365 will alert the families when/if they are needed.

CRISIS PLAN

Multi-Hazard Plan

The Diocese of Greensburg, in cooperation with the schools in the diocese, have developed a diocesan multi-hazard plan that follows the PEMA (Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency) format. Each school has a copy of this plan, which has been individually tailored to meet each school's individual needs and circumstances.

School safety and security are important issues of concern for every school principal. All diocesan schools shall have a Safety Committee consisting of the building principal, pastor, custodian and representatives from the faculty, fire department and police. This committee shall review the building for safety issues and develop a plan for evacuation and lock-down situation.

All schools in the diocese must review their plan each year in order to update information and ensure teachers and staff are familiar with their roles and responsibilities. The Crisis Management Plan designed by the diocese shall be available and accessible for all school employees.

The principal will conduct monthly fire drills and one of which is an evacuation drill annually to a secure site. Lock-down mode is to be conducted once per semester. All buildings must have an operational security system within the building limiting the access of unauthorized persons. All visitors must report to the office and sign-in and sign-out.

Fire Drills

Fire Drills shall be conducted at least once each month. Teachers and students shall become thoroughly familiar with the use of fire escapes, appliances, routes, and exits. When students have reached the designated safety area, the teacher shall call the roll from the class record book. The date of the drill shall be recorded on the diocesan fire drill form. At least one lock-down drill should be conducted each year.

The date of the monthly fire drill/disaster drill should be recorded by the building principal.

Severe Weather Drill

Severe weather drills are conducted annually when announced by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management System through the county offices. The purpose of this exercise is to test procedures in the event of such an emergency. When announced, schools will respond to the scenario presented. The principal reports the results of the drill to the Office for Catholic Schools, and the drill is marked on the fire drill sheet.

Bus Drills

All schools using or contracting for school buses for the transportation of school children shall conduct, on school grounds, two emergency evacuation drills on buses during each school year. The first is to be conducted during the first week of the first school term, and the second during

the month of March, and at such other times as the chief school administrator may require. Each such drill shall include practice and instruction concerning the location, use, and operation of emergency doors and fire extinguishers, and the proper evacuation of buses in the event of fire or accident. School districts conduct the bus drills for those traveling to and from MQA on district buses.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an integral part of the learning process. In order to develop self-control, the student must be helped to understand her/his emotions and impulses, to live in harmony with others, to respect the rules of family, to keep the laws of the country and to obey the laws of God. The dignity of the student demands that humiliating and embarrassing punishments be avoided. Acceptable means of settling behavior problems are reproof, loss of privileges, and detention. Extreme disciplinary problems are referred to the principal for appropriate action. Good classroom control should eliminate the need for rigid disciplinary measures.

Any discipline imposed, including reproof, loss of privileges, and detention should be calculated to be a positive vehicle for the student to develop self-control and adhere to the rules and regulations of the school. Humiliating, embarrassing, or physical punishment does not achieve that goal. After-school detention should be utilized to reinforce with the student that she or he is expected to adhere to the rules and regulations of the school, and also to supplement the child's education by providing appropriate class assignments. More severe penalties authorized by the Diocesan Handbook of Policies are suspension and, as a last resort, expulsion. Physical punishment is expressly prohibited. Of course, teachers and administrators are permitted to take appropriate action, including physical restraint in order to quell a disturbance, for the purpose of self-defense, for the protection of students and staff, or to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object which poses an immediate threat to the safety and welfare of the school community.

Because it is impossible, to foresee all problems that arise, this clause empowers the administration and faculty to take disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the spirit and philosophy of the school even though it is not specified in the Discipline Policy. The principal is the final recourse in all disciplinary situations and may waive any regulation for just cause, at his or her discretion.

Standards of Conduct

Every teacher, assistant principal and principal shall have the right to exercise the same authority as to conduct and behavior over the pupils attending her/his school, during the time they are in attendance, including the time required in going to and from their homes, as the parents, guardians or persons in parental relation to such pupils may exercise over them.

Conduct, whether inside or outside of school, that is detrimental to the welfare of the school may result in disciplinary action.

Detention

Students may be detained after class hours for repeated tardiness, unexcused absences and disciplinary infractions. Parental notification must be given and acknowledged prior to the time of detention. Lunch and bus schedules must be considered in planning detention. Assignments for detention should be related to furthering student achievement.

Suspension

A student may be temporarily suspended by the principal for a serious infraction of school regulations or for repeated detentions. A suspension may vary in length from one to ten days. No prior notice to parents is needed for a suspension.

- The principal shall meet with the parents and the parents shall receive a written notice of suspension.
- The written Notice of Suspension is kept on file in the principal's office and a copy is given to the parents. This document will not only explain why the student was suspended, but will contain an agreement between the student/parents and the principal describing the student's future cooperation in a program designed to resolve the student's problems.
- Suspensions should be held in school with all classwork completed for the day. The student is not marked absent. If the offense is particularly egregious, out-of-school suspension is the remedy. Out-of-school suspensions follow the same guidelines as in-school suspensions except the student is marked absent and assignments are given in the various subject areas for home study.
- With extended suspensions, the parents will meet during this period with the principal and teachers to define expectations upon the student's return.

Expulsion

Expulsion is a permanent separation of students at said school for persistent and willful disregard of school rules. Expulsion is a severe punishment that should be used as a last resort and after serious deliberations, or when circumstances warrant.

Reasons for which a student may be expelled, but are not limited to:

- Infractions of school regulations, or the disciplinary codes applicable to each school.
- Continued misconduct or conduct detrimental to the physical, educational, or moral well-being of other students.
- Continued malicious disobedience or disrespect for authority.
- Possession, use or transporting a weapon.
- Possession, use, sale, conveyance of any controlled substance, drug, look-alike drug, alcohol or anabolic steroid.
- Assault or battery of a fellow student, teacher or employee.
- Bomb threats.
- False alarms.
- Use of vulgar or obscene language.
- Excessive absence or tardiness.
- Fighting.
- Disrespect toward the school in work or action.

An expulsion may also be necessary for a single serious incident or event or situation involving disregard for or a clear violation of a school rule or regulation. An expulsion is a severe punishment and should only be applied in very serious circumstances. Every attempt should be made during earlier offenses, if any, to provide guidance and counseling to the student and parents under the direction of the principal.

- The Principal (or designee) must report the pending expulsion to the Superintendent for Catholic Schools prior to any such decision being finalized and communicated to the student or parent. Immediate suspensions are possible in certain circumstances to allow the principal time to consider an expulsion by gathering the necessary data. Such notification

of the pending expulsion should be made at the time of the suspension, both through a phone call and, as a follow up, in writing.

- Through consultation between and among the Superintendent for Catholic Schools, Principal, and legal department if necessary, the expulsion decision will be finalized and formalized. Usually the decision for expulsion will be made within ten (10) school days from the commencement of the suspension. All procedures as outlined in the applicable student handbooks must be followed, including appropriate communications to the student and parents.
- A written report of the expulsion must be completed and forwarded by the principal to the Superintendent for Catholic Schools. The report must include a copy of the letter of expulsion sent to the student and parents, including a statement that any request for further review of the matter must be forwarded to the Superintendent for Catholic Schools within five (5) days from the date of the expulsion.
- If such a request for a review of the expulsion is made by the student's parents, it must be received in writing by the Superintendent for Catholic Schools within five (5) days from the date of the expulsion. The Superintendent will determine who will participate in this review. The review will be made within a reasonable period of time. The decision from this review will be communicated to the principal by the Superintendent for Catholic Schools. The parents and student will be mailed a written notice of the outcome of this review.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Drug and Alcohol Policy and Administrative Guidelines-Students

A student on school grounds, during a school session, or anywhere at a school-sponsored activity who is under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or mood altering substances or possesses, uses, dispenses, sells or aids in the procurement of alcohol, narcotics, restricted drugs, mood altering substances or any substance purported to be a restricted substance or over the counter drug shall be subjected to discipline. **The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property.**

The policy including its rules, regulations, and guidelines is a coordinated effort by the Office for Catholic Schools to openly and effectively respond to the potential and current uses and abuses of drugs, alcohol, and mood altering substances by the entire student population.

Through the use of curriculum, classroom activities, community support and resources, a strong and consistent administrative and faculty effort, and rehabilitative and disciplinary procedures, the Office for Catholic Schools will work to educate, prevent, and intervene in the use and abuse of all drug, alcohol, and mood altering substances, and alcohol related situations.

Definition of Terms

Drug/Mood Altering Substance/Alcohol: Shall include any alcohol or malt beverage, any drug listed in Act 64 (1972), 35 P.S. 780-101 et. seq., as a controlled substance, chemical, abused substance or medication for which a prescription is required under the law and/or any substance which is intended to alter mood, and/or any anabolic steroid.

Examples of the above include but are not limited to beer, wine, liquor, marijuana, hashish, chemical solvents, glue, look alike substances, and any capsules or pills not registered with the nurse, annotated within the student's health record and given in accordance with the Office for Catholic Schools policy for the administration of medication to students in school.

Student Support System: is a multi-disciplinary team composed of school personnel (teachers, staff, administrators, nurses, counselors) and other members of the community. This team has

been trained to understand and work on the issue of adolescent chemical use, abuse, and dependency and will play a primary role in the identification and referral process of students coming to their attention through the procedures outlined in this policy.

Distributing: deliver, sell, pass, share, or give any alcohol, drug, or mood altering substances, as defined by this policy, from one person to another or to aid therein.

Possession: possess or hold, without any attempt to distribute, any alcohol, drug or mood altering substances determined to be illegal or as defined by this policy.

Cooperative Behavior: shall be defined as the willingness of a student to work with staff and school personnel in a reasonable manner, complying with requests and recommendations of the members of the Student Support System.

Uncooperative Behavior: is the resistance or refusal, either verbal, physical, or passive, on the part of the student to comply with the reasonable request or recommendations of school personnel. Defiance, assault, deceit, and flight shall constitute examples of uncooperative student behavior. Uncooperative behavior shall also include the refusal to comply with the recommendations of the members of the Student Support System.

Drug Paraphernalia: includes any utensil or item which in the school's judgment can be associated with the use of drugs, alcohol, or mood altering substances. Examples include, but are not limited to roach clips, pipes, and bowls.

Guidelines

As an integral part of the Office for Catholic Schools' Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program, these guidelines represent one component in an effort to respond effectively to drug, mood altering substances and alcohol-related situations that may occur at school or at school-sponsored activities. These guidelines are intended to provide a consistent minimum disciplinary means to respond to drug, mood altering substances and alcohol related incidents. The Superintendent for Catholic Schools reserves the right to use any extraordinary measures deemed necessary to control substance abuse even if the same is not provided for specifically in any rule or regulation enumerated herein.

Discipline Procedures-Sale, Use, Possession, or Procurement of Intoxicating Beverages, Narcotics, or Other Restricted Drugs Such as Anabolic Steroids

A student who on school grounds during a school session, or anywhere at a school-sponsored activity, does sell, use, possess, or aid in the procurement of alcohol, narcotics, or restricted drugs, including marijuana or anabolic steroids or other material purported to be such, shall be subject to exclusion from school. **The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property.**

Parents of the students involved are to be contacted immediately by the appropriate school administrator with a recommendation that the student be taken to a physician for a complete examination and request that the parents notify the school of the results of the examination. The principal shall also give immediate notice to the police of the incident and efforts shall be exerted to obtain positive identification of the substance whether it be a narcotic, a restricted drug, alcohol, or marijuana. The school will make every effort to protect a student by assisting the police in the apprehension of the person or persons who made such substances available.

Anabolic Steroids

The use of anabolic steroids, except for a valid medical purpose, by any student involved in school-related athletics is prohibited. Body-building muscle enhancements, increasing muscle bulk or strength, or the enhancement of athletic ability are not valid medical purposes.

Anabolic steroids include any material, compound, mixture, or preparation that includes any of the following or any isomer, ester, salt or derivative of any of the following that acts in the same manner on the human body:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Chorionic gonadotropin | 11. Nadrolone decanoate |
| 2. Clostebol | 12. Nandrolone phenpropionate |
| 3. Dehydrochlormethyltestosterone | 13. Norethandrolone |
| 4. Ethylestrenol | 14. Oxandrolone |
| 5. Fluoxymesterone | 15. Oxymesterone |
| 6. Mesterolone | 16. Oxymetholone |
| 7. Metenolone | 17. Stanozolol |
| 8. Methandienone | 18. Testosterone propionate |
| 9. Methandrostenolone | 19. Testosterone-like related |
| 10. Methyltestosterone | compounds |

Human Growth Hormone (HGH) shall not be included as an anabolic steroid.

The following minimum penalties are prescribed for any student found in violation of this regulation:

- For a first violation, suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the season.
- For a second violation, suspension from school athletics for the remainder of the season and for the following season.

No student shall be permitted to resume participation in school athletics unless the principal has received a medical report indicating that no residual evidence of steroids exists. As a further condition of reinstatement into the school athletic program, the student shall be required to participate in a drug counseling and/or treatment program satisfactory to the principal.

The Superintendent for Catholic Schools must be advised immediately of any student(s) who violate this policy.

LEGAL REFERENCES: Act 93 of 1989
Public School Code of 1949
24 P.S. 407, Rules and Regulations

EMERGENCY CARDS

The school office will maintain an emergency card for each enrolled student. The card shall contain the following information:

- Student's name and address and home phone number
- Names of parents or guardians
- Phone numbers where they may be reached during school day
- Name and phone number of a third party who may be contacted in the event the parents or guardians cannot be reached
- Specific medical information as applicable to daily health and wellness
- Doctor's name and preferred emergency room as conditions permit this option

ESAP

Each diocesan school is required to participate in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Student Assistance Program (SAP) or Elementary Student Assistance Program (ESAP), which are designed to assist school personnel in identifying issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drug and mental health issues which pose a barrier to a student's success. The primary goal of the SAP/ESAP is to help students overcome these barriers in order that they may achieve, remain in school, and advance. Mary Queen of Apostles School has such a program called KESAP, or Knights Elementary Student Assistance Program.

SAP/ESAP is a systemic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team, including school staff and liaisons from community alcohol and drug and mental health agencies. SAP/ESAP team members are trained to identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school and to make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. When the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the SAP/ESAP team will assist the parent and student so they may access services within the community. The student assistance team members do not diagnose, treat or refer to treatment; but they may refer for a screening or an assessment for treatment.

There are four phases to the student assistance process:

- **Referral** - Anyone can refer a student to SAP/ESAP when they are concerned about someone's behavior -- any school staff, a student's friend, a family member or community member. The students themselves can even go directly to the SAP/ESAP team to ask for help. The SAP/ESAP team contacts the parent for permission to proceed with the process.
- **Team Planning** – The SAP/ESAP team gathers objective information about the student's performance in school from all school personnel who have contact with the student. Information is also collected from the parent. The team meets with the parent to discuss the data collected and also meets with the student. Together, a plan is developed that includes strategies for removing the learning barriers and promoting the student's academic and personal success to include in-school and/or community-based services and activities.
- **Intervention and Recommendations** – The plan is put into action. The team assists in linking the student to in-school and/or community-based services and activities. The team might recommend different types of assessment.
- **Support and Follow-Up** – The SAP/ESAP team continues to work with and support the student and their family. Follow-up includes monitoring, mentoring, and motivating for academic success.

It is the parent's right to be involved in the process and to have full access to all school records under the applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Involvement of parents in all phases of the student assistance program underscores the parents' role and responsibility in the decision-making process affecting their children's education and is key to the successful resolution of problems.

EXTENDED DAY

Mary Queen of Apostles School offers an Extended Day program for students in kindergarten through grade 8 at the Greenwald Site until 6:00 pm. Students in kindergarten through grade 3 may be bused to the Greenwald Site for Extended Day. This depends upon the student's eligibility for district busing.

Information and registration forms can be found online under Family Resources, School Forms, Extended Day. A weekly or daily fee is charged for the program.

Students are checked in daily using the log of attendees. Student in clubs report to extended day to check in with the adult before going to their extra-curricular activity. Parents call the supervisor to gain entry to the building and sign the child out for the day. Emergency cards are kept at extended day. If needed the extended day program has a locked medicine box.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extra-curricular clubs, activities, and organizations are also offered to students at Mary Queen of Apostles School. Extra-curricular activities span the arts, language arts, history, science, public speaking, and leadership. Certain programs are competitive. There are tournaments and competitions in science, public speaking, reading, history, and robotics. Students are encouraged to participate in a variety of programs. Forms for participation are found on the website under Activities, Clubs & Activities. Please send the signed forms to school in care of the club advisor.

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trip Policy

Class visits to places of cultural or educational significance give enrichment to the lessons of the classrooms. To ensure the desired outcomes of such trips, teachers should prepare the pupils for the place that is to be visited and the things that are to be seen. A discussion should be held regarding the purpose(s) and goal(s) of the trip.

Field Trip Participation Form

The written consent of parents must be obtained for every child participating on a field trip. A Field Trip Participation Form must inform parents of the following:

- Name, location and date(s) of the event
- Cost to the student
- Mode of transportation to be used
- Name of the supervisor overseeing the activity
- Information on dress and meals
- Parent's responsibility

No student may participate unless a signed Field Trip Participation for the specific event is on file with the principal. This form is located in the appendix of this document.

Transportation

Whenever possible, bus transportation should be provided. The use of private vehicles is strongly discouraged. If a private passenger vehicle must be used, the parent/guardian of the student driver of the vehicle and the parent/guardian of the student passenger(s) must sign the proper form indicating their approval of the field trip circumstances. If a private vehicle is being used, two adults must be in the car with the students. These types of field trip arrangements should be used only on special rare occasions. The special driving form must be complete and submitted to the principal prior to departure.

The driver and/or chaperon should be given a copy of the approved itinerary including the route(s) to be followed and a summary of their responsibilities. For trips other than interschool athletics,

supervision of one (1) adult per ten (10) students is recommended for the elementary and one (1) adult per fifteen (15) students in the secondary school.

Parents may not act as drivers on school field trips unless through discussion with and designation by the school principal.

FUNDRAISING AND TUITION CREDIT

Families are expected to contribute to the fundraising efforts at MQA. A fundraising fee is added to the tuition statement based on the previous year's participation.

Participation in fundraising efforts may include but is not limited to:

- o Contributing to solicitation efforts for our major fundraising events
- o Selling tickets to fundraising events
- o Selling raffle tickets, calendars, etc.

Tuition Credit

Families may also utilize fundraising opportunities that provide a benefit to their family and the school. This program offers a percentage of the profit to the families as tuition credit.

The school offers opportunities for families to earn tuition credit toward the next year's tuition. This includes purchasing MQA grocery cards to the area stores, purchasing gift cards through the SCRIP Program, and participating in other tuition credit opportunities. Tuition credit is earned throughout the year for the upcoming school year. Tuition credit is not transferrable.

A Retail Rebate Agreement form is signed by anyone who wants to help a family earn tuition credit. The form has three options (with only one option selected), is signed once, and is only changed by request of the person making gift card purchases. The form is available online and in the school office.

An administrative fee is set for all programs. The remaining profit from the retail gift card sales is divided between the school and the family receiving credit.

GOVERNANCE

The elementary schools are Pennsylvania Charitable Trusts with the Bishop of Greensburg as the Trustee. They are governed by a Civil Structure and a set of bylaws.

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

On Site Student Programs

Students may benefit from additional educational services. Based on the results of standardized tests, teacher observations, and/or recommendations, students are eligible for the following auxiliary services:

Math/Reading/Language Arts Title I
Math/Reading/Language Arts Act 89
Guidance Services Act 89
Speech and Language Act 89
Nurse/Paraprofessional Act 89

Written parent consent/refusal will be obtained for those students recommended, and will be kept in the student's file.

Psychological Testing Services

- Psychological Testing is available through the district of residence. Testing can be requested to discover disabilities that interfere with learning and to identify giftedness. Contact the office for information and forms.
- The Westmoreland Intermediate Unit has assigned a liaison to the non-public schools for consultation upon request.
- The Westmoreland Intermediate psychologist may complete additional testing every three years.

GRADING

Mary Queen of Apostles School uses PowerTeacher to record assignments, activities, and assessments. The school year is divided into four quarters. Formal grades for each quarter appear on the report card. Comments may also be listed on an individual assignment or at the end of any quarter.

- Cheating, late work, and missing work is recorded as "incomplete" rather than a zero. There is an opportunity to replace an "incomplete" with a score without penalty.
- Teachers list homework in the electronic gradebook, but do not grade it.
- Teachers do not score participation or behavior in academic classes,
- Teachers may score participation in special classes where participation is required for the skill.

Grading Scales

The following code is a general guide to grading in each subject including specials for grades 1-3.

O = 93 – 100

G = 85 – 92

S = 75 – 84

H = 74 or below

I = Incomplete, grade given when exceptional circumstances prevent the completion of quality work.

The following code is a general guide to grading for grades 4-8

A = 93 – 100

B = 85 – 92

C = 75 – 84

D = 65 – 74

F = 64 or below

I = Incomplete, grade given when exceptional circumstances prevent the completion of quality work.

The following code is a general guide for Special grades for grades 4-8.

O = 93 – 100

G = 85 – 92

S = 75 – 84

U = 74 or below

I = Incomplete, grade given when exceptional circumstances prevent the completion of quality work.

Kindergarten's report cards and use of the PowerSchool GradeBook system is different from the 1-8 system.

The following information is a general guide for understanding the kindergarten report card.

- Progress reports are unavailable to view on the PowerSchool Parent Portal
- Kindergarten has their own grading scale---K=at Kindergarten Level P=Progressing IN=Improvement Needed
- The markings are based on concepts taught and reinforced within the quarter.
- Comments are not listed on the report card but are communicated directly with the teacher

Communicating Grades to Parents

It is recommended that parents sign into the PowerSchool Parent Portal to view a child's grades. Automated alerts can be set so that each week, or daily, information on grades can be sent to a parent. With this information, parents can contact a teacher for information or direction.

The school will issue a Progress Report at the mid-term. This is a report requested by the teachers and sent home with the child. Many teachers will ask that the report be signed and returned to assure that the parent(s) received the report.

Teachers may also contact a parent with information about grades and assignments and student preparation as the need arises. Parents, may do likewise, requesting a conference or phone call from the teacher of record for any subject.

Academic Integrity

Any student that does not complete his/her own work, cheats using the work of others, or plagiarizes others' work and submits it as his/her own will have consequences. The work will not be recorded as a grade. The work is still required to be completed for a score.

Homework

The purpose of homework is to strengthen basic skills, extend and reinforce classroom instruction, stimulate further interest, reinforce independent study skills, develop life-long skills of time management and self-direction, and learn responsibility. Home study can reinforce concepts, prepare a student for classwork, and/or assist the student preparing for an assessments. Extension projects may be assigned in addition to daily preparation assignments.

Homework is assigned and the student is expected to be completed and returned on the due date.

Students who do not complete *classwork* in a timely manner may be expected to complete the assignment beyond the school hours. While this is not homework, the assignments are to be submitted on a date given by the teacher.

Travel

A form for vacations is found on the school website under Family Resources, School Forms, Attendance, Educational Trip Request. It is required and provides an excused absence as well as guide the family in what is expected prior to travel or upon return in regards to school work and homework. It is to be submitted prior to the trip with approval given by the principal.

Absences

Students who are absent from school are required to complete the missed classwork and homework.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All students need the following vaccinations for attendance in all grades:

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis*
(1 dose on or after the 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after the 4th birthday and at least 6 months after the previous dose given)**
- 2 doses of measles, mumps, rubella***
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

*Usually given as DTP or DTaP or if medically advisable, DT or Td

**A fourth dose is not necessary if the third dose was administered at age 4 years or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose

***Usually given as MMR

On the first day of school, unless a child has a medical or religious/philosophical exemption, a child must have had at least one dose of the above vaccinations or risk exclusion.

- If a child does not have all the doses listed above, needs additional doses, and the next dose is medically appropriate, the child must receive that dose within the first five days of school or risk exclusion. If the next dose is not the final dose of the series, the child must also provide a medical plan within the first five days of school for obtaining the required immunizations or risk exclusion.
- If a child does not have all the doses listed above, needs additional doses, and the next does is not medically appropriate, the child must provide a medical plan within the first five days of school for obtaining the required immunizations or risk exclusion.
- The medical plan must be followed or risk exclusion.

Seventh Grade

For attendance in seventh grade students need:

- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap) on the first day of 7th grade.
- 1 dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) on the first day of 7th grade.

On the first day of seventh grade, unless the child has a medical or religious/philosophical exemption, a child must have had the above vaccines or risk exclusion.

ITEMS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Mary Queen of Apostles School is not responsible for loss or damage to any items brought to school by a student. This includes, but is not limited to all electronic devices.

LIBRARY

Mary Queen of Apostles has a library at both sites. Both use the Follett Destiny system for cataloging books, checking out/returning books to students, and searching the collection for books by title, subject, author, or key words.

At the Freeport Road Site a library teacher manages the library and holds one class a week for students. Students are asked to return their library book the day before the class so the librarian can catalog and shelve the books. Student do not check out a new book if the previous one has not been returned.

At the Greenwald Site, the homeroom teacher manages the checking out and return of books on the day the class has library/research.

Lost books are assessed a value and a fee is charged for replacement of the book.

LITURGY

Students participate in the celebration of Mass in kindergarten through grade 8. At the Freeport Road Site, students attend Mass at Mount St. Peter Church at the 8:30 morning Mass. Kindergarten students attend Mass twice a month. Grades 1 to 3 attend weekly. Students in grades 4-8 attend Mass at the Greenwald Site Chapel with Mass scheduled at 10:10. Two grades attend weekly, with the grades rotating each week.

Students have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the blessing of throats, reception of ashes, participate in the Stations of the Cross, and participate in May Crowning and Living Rosary.

Student have the opportunity in grade 3 to serve as cantors, gift bearer, and readers. In grades 4-8, student serve as altar servers, cantors, readers and sacristans.

If school is in session on a Holy Day of Obligation, students will attend Mass that day at Mount St. Peter Church. All students are to report by bus or car to the Freeport Road Site for Mass. A bus is chartered after Mass to return student in grades 4-8 to the Greenwald Site.

LOCKERS

Students at the Greenwald Site have lockers. The lockers are assigned by the teacher. They do not have locks. Lockers are to be kept neat and any decorations, tasteful. The lockers are for book bags, books, and coats. Personal items brought to school are stored at one's own risk.

LOST AND FOUND

Both sites have a lost and found. Students have access to looking through the collection of items during their recess. Parents may ask for permission to search the contents as well. Labeling all clothing and accessories, lunch boxes and book bags is recommended.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Mary Queen of Apostles School offers an independent school lunch program that does not have the same restrictions or requirements as the National School Lunch Program. Our school lunches are prepared fresh daily, in-house. Students have a choice of an entrée, fruit/vegetable, and often

a dessert. Students may purchase an entire lunch or make ala carte purchase. Snacks are available for purchase at the Greenwald Site. Milk is sold at both sites. A monthly menu is found on our web site under Family Resources, Lunch Menu. An entrée, a weekly alternate, salad, and peanut butter and jelly offer all students a healthy choice that will most likely fit their palette.

Mary Queen of Apostles School will contact families who qualify for free or reduced lunch by mail. Parents have the right to refuse the free or reduced meal. This information is confidential and does not appear anywhere on the PowerSchool system for others to see.

Meal and ala carte transactions are recorded in PowerLunch, a special section of PowerSchool. Parents are to send in a school lunch payment of any amount that will be deposited into the student(s) account. Alerts are sent when the balance reaches \$0. If a student has a balance in arrears, lunch options are limited to peanut butter and jelly or a cheese sandwich if allergies prohibit PB&J, and no ala carte purchases can be made until payment is made.

It is recommended that students with special dietary needs/food allergies that cannot be accommodated in an open kitchen system pack a lunch from home. Mary Queen of Apostles School offers foods that contain peanut butter, tree nuts, eggs, dairy, and gluten. Both kitchens have areas for cooking and preparing foods with peanut butter to keep students with allergies safe. Additionally, Mary Queen of Apostles School is **not responsible** for food-label interpretation or food cross-contamination of any processed or prepared food purchased from a vendor. A “peanut-free” area is provided in the cafeteria for students who need a safe space to eat. A safe space for eating can be set aside for any allergy known to the school staff.

The school does not refrigerate, cook, or heat meals for those who pack a lunch. Fast food meals are not permitted. Soda pop is not permitted.

MEDICATION

Administration of Medications Policy

The Office for Catholic Schools, Diocese of Greensburg, recognizes that parents have the primary responsibility for the health of their children. It also recognizes that many children are able to attend school because of the effective use of medication in the treatment of chronic disabilities or illnesses. The Office for Catholic Schools believes that every effort should be made to administer medications at home. However, any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day must comply with school regulations. These are necessary for the protection of both the student and the school personnel.

All visits to the office to see the nurse, report an injury, or complain of discomfort or illness is logged in a nurse’s log with the date, student name, complaint, resulting first aid, box to indicate if a parent was called, and initials of the attending office personnel or Act 89 nurse/paraprofessional, or New Kensington Arnold School Nurse.

This policy shall be implemented in collaboration with public school districts who provide health services to Catholic schools.

Annually, the New Kensington Arnold School District Health Department provides Standing Orders for First Aid signed by the School Physician for Mary Queen of Apostles School. In the course of the school day, students frequently need first aid. The school nurse or school designee

may administer first aid. When administering first aid, some products are used to reduce the possibility of infection or to give relief in non-emergency situations.

The following products are used in compliance with manufacturer's instructions and have been deemed as safe to use by the school physician.

Basic First Aid items include:

1. Antacid tablets such as Tums or Maalox
 - a. Tums: age 6-11 – 800 mg/dose, maximum 3 doses in 24 hours
 - b. Tums > age 11 – 1000 mg/dose, maximum 7 doses in 24 hours
2. Blistex
3. Triple antibiotic ointment
4. Calamine or Caladryl lotion
5. Cough lozenges
6. Eye wash
7. Burn free gel
8. Heating pad or Therma Care air activated heat pad for menstrual cramps
9. Isopropyl rubbing alcohol
10. Medi-quick spray
11. Orajel
12. Peroxide
13. Sting kill swabs
14. Vasaline
15. Visine
16. Contact lense drops
17. Biofreeze pain relieving gel
18. Tylenol or Motrin – These will be administered in age appropriate doses for grades 6-12 that do not exceed recommended amounts
 - a. Acetaminophen: age 11 – 325 mg
 - b. Acetaminophen: age > 11 – 500 mg
19. Benadryl
 - a. Age 6-12 – 25 mg po q 4-6 hours prn for allergic reaction
 - b. Age >12 -50 mg po q 4-6 hours prn for allergic reaction
20. Epi Pen – Use as directed pm for anaphylaxis for students greater than 30 Kg
21. Epi Pen Jr – Use as directed pm for anaphylaxis for students who are 15-30 Kg

These products will not be used on students who have a known adverse reaction to these products. The above items may be substitute if a new product arrives on the market that has been proven to work better for similar purposes.

In addition, parent permission must be obtained during the current school year before Tylenol or Motrin can be administered.

Beyond the general Standing Orders, only essential medications will be given at school, with parent/guardian taking full responsibility for any medication sent into the school. The following regulations are in effect:

Administration of Medication During School Hours

Private physician's written request for administration of specific dosage of medication should include:

- Date;
- Student's name;
- Diagnosis;
- Medication, dosage, how administered, time schedule and length of time to be administered in school;
- Possible side effects or contraindications;
- Any curtailment of specific school activity (lab, sports, shop, driver's training, etc.);
- Listing any other medications which have been prescribed by the physician;
- Physician's signature and telephone number;
- Parent's signature.

School Nurse Responsibilities

The nurse is responsible for orientation of the person(s) authorized to administer medication. Orientation should include:

- Principles of medication administration;
- Review of specific medications which are to be administered, including side effects;
- For students on long-term medication, the nurse should have conferences with the parents regarding responses to medication and a written report should be given as needed for the family to give the physician.

Parental or guardian written request and authorization to give each specific medication accompanies the physician's written approval/request. Information should include:

- Date;
- Student's name;
- Prescribing doctor's name;
- Statement requesting and authorizing the administration of the medication, name of medication, dosage and time interval;
- List of all current medication taken by the student (home or school).

The school nurse or Act 89 Nurse/paraprofessional will administer the medication.

Delivery of Medication

Medication is to be delivered to the school by the parent, guardian or responsible adult or student to the school nurse

- If the school nurse is not available, the office will hold the medicine for the school nurse or Act 89 nurse/paraprofessional to review and approve that all forms and directives are followed.
- The medication will be recorded in the log with the date, name and amount of medication delivered and stored in the locked medicine box.
- The physician's written request and parental authorization is brought with the medication and delivered to the school nurse or designated person.
- When possible, the parent should notify the school nurse in advance that the child will need medication.
- When someone other than the parent brings the medication to the school, the medication should be placed in a sealed envelope by the parent. It should be marked with the name of the child, the name and the amount of medication sent, or be in a pharmacy labeled bottle.

Medication Restrictions

Supply of medication to be kept at school:

- Single day supply or week supply for short-term illness.
- One or two weeks for long-term chronic illness. This would afford the nurse the opportunity to meet the parents and discuss the child's response to medication, etc. The amount of medication stored by the school should be based on the length of time medications are to be administered and other individual factors.

Labeling and Storage of Medication in School

- Medication brought to school must be in a properly labeled container. (The container should be labeled by the pharmacist or doctor.)
- Label must include:
 - Student's name;
 - Name of physician;
 - Date of prescription;
 - Name and telephone number of pharmacy;
 - Name of medication, dosage and frequency of administration.

Medications are stored in a locked container in a secured area, which is convenient to the person responsible for administering medication. Medications requiring refrigeration are stored in the refrigerator in the office.

Unused medication will be given to parents for disposition. Record date, time, amount, and signature of parent/guardian or adult receiving medication.

Personnel Responsible for Administration of Medication

The school nurse, when available, is the primary person to administer medication followed by the nurse/paraprofessional funded through Act 89.

Functions of the school nurse:

- Confers with parents at the time the medication is delivered.
- Responsible for the administration and recording of medication.
 - Medications to be given by injection will be given only by the school nurse.
 - Injectable medications must comply with the same regulations required for oral medications.
 - Supervises appropriate self-administration of medication.
 - Medications should be taken in the presence of the person administering the medication.
- Alerts appropriate school staff to possible side effects of medication which need to be reported. Alerts appropriate teacher(s) if pupil should refrain from any school activity (eg., lab, shop, sports, etc.)
- Confers with physicians and pharmacists as needed.
- Consults by phone or in person with physician or parent at any time.

Responsibilities of the Principal:

- Designates in writing the person(s) authorized to administer medications (if other than the school nurse). At Mary Queen of Apostles School this is the Act 89 Nurse/paraprofessional. For Standing Orders that are non-emergency, it is the office staff.
- Reviews school policy regarding administration of medication by designee.
- Contacts the school nurse on receipt of medication request.

- Reviews specific medications with the school nurse. Review to include pupil response and emergency procedures.
 - The school will administer only essential medicines prescribed by a physician and accompanied by written instructions signed by a physician. Essential medication includes only medicine prescribed by a physician, and without which the student could not attend school.
 - Fully inform parents that if the school nurse is not available and the parents cannot administer the medication, the administrator will give the medication only in an emergency.
 - Students in grades K-8 are covered by the New Kensington-Arnold SD's physician's Standing Orders. This allows some over-the-counter medicine to be dispensed.
- No one other than the school nurse or nurse paraprofessional administers medication that are ordered by a private physician for a particular student and for a particular medical need.

It is required that:

- School personnel supervise the student's self-administration of medication when a student is old enough or capable to do so.
- An area be designated for administration of medication which will afford the student privacy.
- In-service training on emergency procedures (e.g., what to do if a pill becomes lodged in the throat), Epi Pen use, and inhaler protocol be made available by the school nurse.
- School personnel be responsible for observing and reporting to nurse or school administration report any side effects or other problems concerning administration of medication.

Documentation of Medication Administration

- Physician and parental medication request becomes part of student's health record.
- Log or written record indicating the administration of medication should be established.
- Teachers are responsible for observing and reporting to nurse or school administration any side effects.
- School nurses are responsible for reporting side effects to the prescribing physician.

OFF-CAMPUS CONDUCT

The administration of Mary Queen of Apostles School reserves the right to discipline its students for off-campus behavior that is not in line with behavior expectations of its students during the course of the school day. This off campus behavior includes, but is not limited to *cyber-bullying*.

Pennsylvania Act 26 (effective September 28, 2015)

What is at Issue?

Act 26 makes it a criminal offense for a person to:

- Intend to harass, annoy, or alarm a child
- Use electronic means to directly address a child or indirectly address a child through social media; and
- Engage in a continuing course or conduct which either
 - Makes a seriously disparaging statement or opinion about a child's Physical Characteristics, Sexuality,

- Sexual activity, or
- Mental or physical health
- Threatens to inflict harm on the child

Punishment

A third degree misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum \$2500 fine and/ or one year in prison. Juveniles charged with the crime may be referred to a diversionary program, which might include an education program on cyber harassment. Once completed, the juvenile's record may be expunged.

Where is the Crime Committed? The crime may be deemed to have been committed where the victim child reside. Cyberbullying complaints should be directed to law enforcement in which the child lives.

How does this affect Schools? The law does not place any duty, mandatory reporting or otherwise, upon schools; however, schools should:

- Educate students and families that cyberbullying is now a criminal offense (“cyberharassment”);
- Refer families complaining of out-of- school cyberbullying incidents to law enforcement in their hometown; and
- Contact police and advise of any cyber harassment occurring on school grounds and refer the victim's family to do the same.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

As partners in the educational process at Mary Queen of Apostles School, we ask parents:

- To set rules, times, and limits so that your child:
 - Gets to bed early on school nights;
 - Arrives at school on time and is picked up on time at the end of the day;
 - Is dressed according to the school dress code;
 - Completes assignments on time; and
 - Has funds in PowerLunch for lunch or packs a nutritional lunch.
- To actively participate in school activities such as Parent-Teacher Conferences;
- To see that the student pays for any damage to school books or property due to carelessness or neglect on the part of the student;
- To notify the school with a written note when the student has been absent or tardy;
- To notify the school office of any changes of address or important phone numbers;
- To meet all financial obligations to the school;
- To inform the school of any special situation regarding the student's well-being, safety, and health;
- To complete and return to school any requested information promptly;
- To read school notes and newsletters and to show interest in the student's total education;
- To support the religious and educational goals of the school;
- To attend Mass and teach the Catholic faith by word and example;
- To support and cooperate with the discipline policy of the school;
- To treat teachers with respect and courtesy in discussing student problems

PARENT'S ROLE IN EDUCATION

We, at Mary Queen of Apostles School, consider it a privilege to work with parents in the education of children because we believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Therefore, it is your right and your duty to become the primary role models for the development of your child's life---physically, mentally, spiritually, emotionally, and psychologically. Your choice of Mary Queen of Apostles School involves a commitment and exhibits a concern for helping your child to recognize God as the greatest good in his/her life.

Good example is the strongest teacher. Your personal relationship with God, with each other, and with the Church community will affect the way your child relates to God and others. Ideals taught in school are not well rooted in the child unless these are nurtured by the example of good Catholic/Christian morality and by an honest personal relationship with God in your family life.

Once you have chosen to enter into a partnership with us at Mary Queen of Apostles School, we trust you will be loyal to this commitment. During these formative years (preschool to grade 8), your child needs constant support from both parents and faculty in order to develop his/her moral, intellectual, social, cultural, and physical endowment. Neither parents nor teachers can afford to doubt the sincerity of the efforts of their educational partner in the quest of challenging, yet nourishing, the student to reach his/her potential. It is vital that both parents and teachers remember that allowing oneself to be caught between the student and the other partner will never have positive results. **To divide authority between school and home or within the home will only teach disrespect of all authority.** If there is an incident at school, you as parents must make investigation of the complete story your first step. Evidence of mutual respect between parents and teachers will model good mature behavior and relationships. Talking negatively about a child's teacher at home will only create an attitude of distrust toward the teacher, the school, and the parent.

Students are naturally eager to grow and learn. However, sometimes in the process of maturation new interests may cause them to lose focus. As this natural process occurs, the student needs both understanding and discipline. At times, your child may perceive discipline as restrictive. However, it is boundaries and limits which provide a young person with both guidance and security.

It is essential that a child take responsibility for grades he/she has earned and be accountable for homework, long-term assignments, major tests, service projects, and all other assignments. Parents are encouraged to let their child experience a logical consequence for an inappropriate action or behavior. This responsibility also extends to times of absence.

Together, let us begin this year with a commitment to partnership as we support one another in helping your child to become the best person he/she is capable of becoming.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION – SCHOOL COMMUNITY GROUP

The School Community Group (SCG) is an organization to which all parents/guardians belong. Its function is to promote the school and to provide opportunities for school families and those interested in MQA a chance to get acquainted, be informed, and work for the school's success and viability. It is a volunteer group.

- Parents may elect to run for an office on the SCG Board in the spring of each year.

- Specific information about the SCG can be found online on the school website.

PARTIES AND GIFTS

Parties for holidays are a part of the school experience. Homeroom teachers coordinate parties for their students. A party planning form is used to guide the party plans. Teachers may/may not request that parents participate in planning and/or execution of the party. Only parents with active clearances and trainings can attend.

Invitations for personal parties should be sent to the homes of students using postal mail unless an invitation is being given to *every student in the entire grade*. If choosing to send Valentines, they are to be distributed to every child in the class. A class list will be supplied.

Students should not exchange individual gifts at school. This gesture only creates hurt feelings among other students.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASS

Attendance is required for physical education classes. Medical excuses must be presented when a student will miss more than three classes a quarter. If a doctor limits a student's activity in physical education class, a doctor's release is required to lift the limitations and return to class; a parent release will not suffice. Students cannot participate in sports or recess when a doctor limits class activity.

Students wear a school p.e. uniform to class and tennis shoes that confirm to the uniform policy.

Students at the Freeport Road Site have class in Marble Hall. Students at the Greenwald Site have class in the gymnasium or as weather permits and object warrant, outdoors on the playground.

POWER SCHOOL STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Diocese of Greensburg utilizes the PowerSchool Student Information System (SIS) to administer and maintain our student records across all areas, some of which include demographics, attendance, and grading. PowerSchool is widely adopted across the world and contains one of the largest user communities in K-12 education technology. PowerSchool provides an end to end platform for all user types, sharing information through various portals. School Administrators maintain student demographic information, schedules, and daily attendance records. Teachers enter and maintain meeting attendance records, assignments, and assessments within a unified teacher gradebook and portal. Parents and students view school bulletins, attendance records, and grade information through both a web-based portal and mobile device application. PowerLunch is used to record and process records for students purchasing lunch.

The diocesan PowerSchool implementation also includes an integrated notification product, SchoolMessenger, to broadcast important school information, attendance notifications, weather delays, and emergency information through voice, e-mail and SMS broadcast channels.

PROMOTION POLICY AND RETENTION POLICY

Retention after third grade is rare and based on extenuating circumstances. Research shows that retention does not improve achievement, but promotion plus remediation does. Parents will be notified early in the school year when there is question of retention of a child in the early childhood program or the primary program.

Remediation alternatives must be considered before retention of a student. These include providing extra instructional help within the context of normal grade promotion; providing remediation through government programs during the school day; tutoring before and after school hours; providing remediation through summer school; using instructional aides to work with the child in the regular classroom; encouraging peer tutoring, as well as other identified recommended strategies.

To help determine specific needs and strategies, a psycho-educational testing may be recommended by the school. The parents must request the testing through their district of residence. Both the parents and the school will provide information to the district to guide testing.

RECESS

Students have recess daily. As weather permits, recess is held outdoors. During inclement weather, students at the Freeport Road Site either walk for exercise or socialize with games, art, and activities with a classroom. At the Greenwald Site, students report to the gymnasium for recess.

Students cannot participate in recess when a medical excuse limiting physical activity in physical education class and/or sports is filed. Recess activity may resume when the attending doctor reinstates the child and lifts the limitations.

REPORT CARDS AND PROGRESS REPORTS

In all elementary schools, reporting pupil progress to parents shall occur as soon as possible after the 45 day quarter has ended. Each local elementary school shall use the official diocesan report card either by paper or electronically. The official diocesan report card shall be evaluated every six years by a committee established through the Office for Catholic Schools.

Parent-teacher conferences shall be used in conjunction with the report card as a means of evaluating progress. Principals of local elementary schools shall establish policy for scheduling parent-teacher conferences. These conferences shall occur at least one time during the school year.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER DISMISSAL

Students may return to the school after dismissal for clubs and activities that are held in the evening.

Students attempting to return to school for items they forgot, may or may not be admitted based on the time someone is in the office to give entry.

SCHOOL HOURS

School hours are from 7:30 to 3:30. Extra-curricular activities may continue beyond the day until 5:00 pm. Saturday hours are also used for extra-curricular competitions. Evenings are used for play practice and sport practices.

Tardy bells ring at 7:50 at Greenwald Site and 7:55 at Freeport Road Site. In the event of tardy arrival and for the safety of your child, parents must park, enter the building with their child, and sign their child in at the office. The time for the tardy bells at both sites is set electronically. It is not set to cell phones or our battery operated clocks. When the tone sounds, please use the main entrance and sign your child in for the day.

Freeport Road Site Arrival

Bus riders enter the building as the bus arrives, no earlier than 7:30 am. Car riders may enter the building between 7:40 and 7:55 am. Students need time to complete morning routines in homeroom, organize for the day, and greet each other. The tardy bell rings at 7:55 and prayer is at 8:00.

Greenwald Site Arrival

Bus riders enter the building as the bus arrives, no earlier than 7:30 am. Car riders may enter the building between 7:30 and 7:50 am. Students need time to complete morning routines in homeroom, organize for the day, and greet each other. The tardy bell rings at 7:50 and prayer is at 7:55.

Freeport Road Site Dismissal

Bus dismissal is at 2:30 pm, 11:30 am on early dismissal days, and 1:00 pm on early release days. Car dismissal is at 2:40 pm, 11:40 am on early dismissal days, and 1:05 pm on early release days.

Greenwald Site Dismissal

Bus dismissal is at 2:40 pm, 11:40 am on early dismissal days, and 1:10 pm on early release days. Car dismissal is at 2:50 pm, 11:50 am on early dismissal days and 1:15 pm on early release days.

Extended Day

The Extended Day program is offered after school until 6:00 pm at the Greenwald Site. The program does not run on early dismissal and early release days.

SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS

The school office is open on all school days from 7:30 am – 3:30 pm. During early dismissal days, the office closes at noon. On early release days, the office is open until 3:30.

During the summer, the Greenwald Site school office is open Monday through Thursday from 7:30 am – 3:30 pm and on Friday from 8:00 am – Noon. The Freeport Road office is closed.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

It will be the financial obligation of the parent to compensate the school for the replacement of any furniture, equipment, buildings, or anyone's personal property damaged by their child. Textbooks loaned to the student must have a proper book cover. Unless the textbook is a consumable, no writing in textbooks is permitted. The parent will pay a fine or replacement for damaged or lost texts before any final reports, transcripts, or diplomas are presented.

SEARCH

The school reserves the right to search *anything* brought on school property.

SERVICE PROJECTS

Mary Queen of Apostles School encourages service to others in action, prayer, and financial provisions. We support the outreach projects of our parishes. These include Try Life Center, Knead Café, parish food banks, HOPE Center, Community Clothes Closet, Holy Childhood Missions, and Project Haiti. Other service projects may occur as need arises or as students suggest them.

SEXTING

Students involved in possession or transmission of inappropriate photos on their cell phones or other electronic devices face suspension and/or expulsion plus police notification

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Parents/Guardians are requested to notify the School Office in writing of any change in demographic information such as: address, custody, home telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, business phone numbers, e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers of emergency contacts. This will guarantee that office records are accurate, complete, and up-to-date.

STUDENT DIRECTORY

Mary Queen of Apostles School has an electronic school directory. While it isn't published, it is made available in parts as follows:

5. By default your child's name, phone, home address, and email is provided to each teacher,
6. Names and email and phone to The School Community Group
7. Name and email to our school photographer
8. And, if your child is in grade 6-8, that same information is shared with St. Joseph HS.

If there is information you would prefer NOT be shared, please send your request to both the GS school office and the FRS school office staff and the principal by the last school day in August. All staff members should be made aware of the request and not just the office and homeroom teacher.

STUDENT RECORDS

Mary Queen of Apostles School adheres to the Buckley Amendment (Family Education Rights and Privacy) regarding access to student records. Records of students transferring to other schools will only be sent through the US Mail. No records will be given to parents to transport to the new school.

Students requesting records/transcripts/recommendations must make a five school-day request to the School Office. All forms should be submitted to the Mary Queen of Apostles School Office for distribution. Completed forms will be sent via the U.S. Mail. Special handling will require that all postal fees be paid by the parents.

Medical records are transferred by the New Kensington-Arnold SD nurse.

ONLY health records will be sent to transferring schools of students whose financial commitment is in arrears.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

At Mary Queen of Apostles School, learning is our priority. The school building is well cared for and the learning environment is warm, inviting, and centered in God's love. The latest and best textbooks and materials and equipment are purchased on a rotation basis for the quality education that is provided for each child.

It is expected that each child:

- Live the philosophy and mission statement of Mary Queen of Apostles School.
- Come to school on a regular basis; be on time; be prepared.
- Put forth effort as you recognize your special gifts and develop them.
- Respect and obey all teachers, staff, and volunteers.
- Respect the school property.
- Speak and act appropriately.
- Be responsible for protecting the rights of others.
- Accept responsibility for your own actions as well as in your participation in group actions. Be truthful and candid.
- Observe all rules and policies.
- Complete all assigned class work in a timely manner.
- Accept responsibility for his/her actions.
- Make proper use of the facilities including the washroom and cafeteria.
- Use only the materials assigned to him/her.
- Dress in the school uniform and follow the dress code.

Violations of any nature to school property will be addressed on an individual basis for restitution/replacement.

TELEPHONE

The office telephones are available for student use as needed. The telephones are answered by school personnel daily. If unavailable, a voice messaging system is in place. Calls are returned the same day if messages are left during the school day. Messages left after hours are returned the following school day.

TESTING

The Office for Catholic Schools in consultation with school representatives shall determine the standardized testing program to be used through grades 3-8 to ensure continuity of results and student progress. The use of other tests shall be determined locally. Standardized tests will be given to students according to the grade in which they are registered for the year.

- DIBELS literacy assessment is given to students in kindergarten to grade three in the fall, winter, and spring.

- Star Reading Test is given three times a year in the primary grades.
- IOWA tests grades three through eight in the spring. The diocese may choose to test grade two at some point.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is provided by a student's district of residence. During the summer, a list of registered students is provided to each district. Busing is scheduled by the district's transportation office. Notification of bus stops and times is sent to the parents or, in some districts, posted on the school's web site. Mary Queen of Apostles School does not schedule busing, nor can MQA change busing. The school does not notify parents of district bus stops and times.

In the event a parent would like to change the bus stop for arrival and dismissal, the parent must contact the district transportation office to do so. As long as the change is within the district's boundaries, the change can be made.

Districts do not permit students from other districts to ride their buses. Some do not allow bus changes within the district, either.

Weather delays are determined by districts. Bus transportation to and from school is dependent upon the delays/closures called by your district.

Student behavior is monitored by the bus drivers. Reports of unacceptable or unsafe behavior is noted with information sent to the school, parent, and bus company. Repeated offenses may result in a student losing the privilege to ride the bus.

Students who elect not to take the bus, or those not assigned a bus according to district policy are car riders. Those responsible for arrival and dismissal should know the procedures for both.

Arrival and Dismissal Maps for each site are found on our website under School Forms. A calendar with vacations, holidays, early dismissals, and early releases is provided to parents, districts, and bus companies.

TUITION

Tuition

The Office for Catholic Schools coordinates a tuition policy to be utilized by the Catholic schools within the Diocese of Greensburg. This policy is established to ensure that the tuition procedures and guidelines are consistent and fair among families with children attending Catholic schools within the Diocese. This policy is implemented through the Office for Catholic Schools, under the approval of the Superintendent for Catholic Schools. The Office for Catholic Schools reserves the right to adjust this policy and coinciding procedures as deemed necessary.

Establishing Tuition

The applicable school administration works with the Office for Catholic Schools to establish a tuition rate that is representative of the school budget needs. The tuition rate is also a product of the communities and families that are served.

Tuition Planning, Payment Schedule and Incidental Billing through FACTS

All schools follow the following process:

- End of January – beginning of February – Catholic schools open their application process for the upcoming school year and FACTS Grant and Aid application forms are available for parents/guardians to submit for financial aid. If families have applied to FACTS Grant and Aid by March 15, and the student attends the school during the upcoming school year, the FACTS application fee will be deducted from the student’s tuition.
- End of May-End of June – Once parents/guardians have completed the FACTS Grant and Aid financial aid application process and this information has been verified, financial aid award letters are disseminated by the school to parents/guardians noting the tuition amount with any scholarships and financial aid awards.
- July 10 – Tuition Agreement Form is due.
- July 20 – Tuition payments begin.

All tuition payments are managed through FACTS Tuition Management System. Families can set up their [FACTS Tuition Management accounts](#) choosing the option for payment. Included in the Tuition Management System is the Incidental Billing System used at MQA for other school fees.

Options for payment:

- One payment by July 20th of the upcoming school year with no fee charged for tuition or incidental billing.
- Two equal payments – Set up on FACTS Payment Plans due by July 20th of the upcoming school year and the second payment due by January 20th of the current school year. A fee is charged for incidental billing.
- Monthly payment plan set up on FACTS Payment Plans that will bring the balance to zero by June 30 of the current school year. A fee is charged for payments which includes incidental billing.
- Any of the above options, but paid through a credit card if available. If a credit card payment method is chosen, an additional service fee is charged with the service fee announced on an annual basis. A fee is charged for the payments including incidental billing.
- A combination of above options approved by school administrator. Please indicate which options you are using and provide details of the pre-arranged agreement on the Tuition Payment Agreement Form. A fee is charged for the payments including incidental billing.
- No cash will be accepted as payment.

The chosen method for payment must be indicated on the Tuition Payment Agreement, and signed and returned by the parents/guardians. Payments begin in July and use the previous year’s schedule unless a new one is requested or set up by the family.

Tuition Payment in Default

If a payment is not made, for whatever reason, the following process will be followed:

- The parents/guardians will be notified in writing of the payment not being received.
- The parents/guardians will be given 20 calendar days to bring the account to current status or meet with school administration to have an adjusted payment contract approved (not a guarantee).
- If the account is not brought to current status, or an adjusted payment contract is not agreed upon and approved by school administration, the student enrollment will cease at the end of the current quarter.

The parents/guardians must agree to the following:

- To pay all amounts due under the tuition payment agreement/policy. If another person is responsible to pay any part of the amount due for the child(ren), and she/he fails to pay when due, the parents/guardians must agree to pay all amounts due immediately upon notification by the school;
- To pay for the entire quarter if the child(ren) leave before that quarter is completed;
- To abide by the student-parent handbook and know that if the child(ren) violates any portion of the student-parent handbook and/or is removed or expelled from school for any reason consistent with the student-parent handbook or Office for Catholic Schools policy, then the parents/guardians are not entitled to a proportionate refund of tuition. In addition, the parents/guardians are legally responsible for paying any tuition owed at the time the child(ren) stopped attending the school.
- To be legally responsible for paying the tuition described above according to the tuition payment agreement and within the applicable timeframes. The school may take any action available and consistent with applicable law in order to collect unpaid tuition owed by the parents/guardians including but not limited to withholding academic transcripts and diplomas.
- To understand that their child(ren) may be subject to restriction of school activities or events while tuition is in default.

Tuition & Transfers from MQA within the Current School Year:

Students choosing to transfer from Mary Queen of Apostles School during the current school year should expect a partial reimbursement of tuition according to the following schedule:

1. Transfer during the first quarter, 75% reimbursement of parent's portion of cost to educate
2. Transfer during the second quarter, 50% reimbursement of parent's portion of cost to educate
3. Transfer during the third quarter, 25% reimbursement of parent's portion of cost to educate
4. Transfer during the fourth quarter, 0% reimbursement of parent's portion of cost to educate

Transfer of Students with Past Balance

No students will be accepted at any Catholic school within the Diocese of Greensburg if they are carrying a past due balance from any other Catholic school within the Diocese of Greensburg.

UNIFORMS AND DRESS CODE

Mary Queen of Apostles School has a school uniform that is worn by students in grade K-8. The uniform options can be found in the handbook under Uniforms. The dress code is based on uniformity. It is grounded in basic, simple, colors and non-descript clothing and accessories. This includes socks, tights, hair accessories, etc. The school uniform includes the physical education uniform.

PNUT days (Please No Uniform Today) are to be Catholic school appropriate. If a dress up day is listed, this means that this day is for wearing clothing that is nicer and dressier. Our picture day is a dress up day. Dress down days mean that jeans and shorts and non-uniform shoes and clothing can be worn. However there are basic levels of appropriateness that also apply here, jeans cannot be ripped; shorts, skirts, or dresses must be at least fingertip length; shirts should be appropriate in

designs and style; legging style pants must be worn with a tunic top. The body should be covered and the tightness of the clothing should be negligible.

Any teacher, staff member, or principal can make a determination about uniform or non-uniform dress code violations. An email with the first infraction will be sent to the parents/guardians. Students will be asked to remove items that are not to code. Parents will be called for dress code violations that need a change of clothing. Further violations will result in discipline record.

General Dress Code Information

- All school uniforms are to be purchased only from Schoolbelles and all physical education uniforms are purchased through the school. While other companies make school uniform pieces, they are acceptable only if they *match* the Schoolbelles design and color and are purchased at the risk of not being permitted.
- The dress code for students in Levels K-8 is the school uniform worn properly at all times. Shirts are to be tucked in for both boys and girls. Banded polo shirts are meant to be worn outside the skirt then bloused over the band to give the appearance of a shirt that is tucked in. Belts are to be worn with slacks and shorts with belt loops. Skirts, kilts, jumpers, and skorts are to be worn no more than two inches above the knee or longer. Hemming them for 2 inches above the knee means they will need to be unhemmed or replaced as they grow taller. Allow for growth. Uniform sweaters are red or navy, plain knit with no embellishments. The MQA School navy or red sweatshirts and hoodies are uniform and may be worn in the classroom. Clothing with logos (other than MQA) or brand symbols or school spirit wear may not be worn in the classroom.
- Make up is not permitted. Boys may not wear pierced earrings to school. Tattoos are not allowed. Boy's hair should not be in the eyes, or over the collar. Girl's hair should not be over/in the eyes. Hair accessories are to be red, navy, white, black, or Schoolbelles' plaid. Other fads, trends, fashion statements, or hair fashions may be disallowed.
- Tennis shoes or tennis type shoes are to be worn with the school uniform. Shoes are to be solid black, white, beige, brown, gray, navy (not royal blue). They may be a combination of these colors, too. Tennis shoes with accents of red are permitted. The shoe itself is not red. The shoes are to be flat, not having a wedge or a raised heel. No sandals, sling backs, clogs, or flip flops are permitted. Boots (see shoe colors) are allowed from November 1st through March 31st. Socks or footed tights are to be worn. Leggings are not permitted. Socks are a solid color: navy, red, white, black, or khaki.
- A gym uniform is to be worn to and from school for physical education class. Tennis shoes for physical education class are also worn on gym day. **These are to follow the same rules as the school shoes.** Students do not call home for gym uniforms but have an alternative assignment for class.
- Uniform catalogs are available prior to the uniform fitting in May. Uniforms may be ordered at the annual uniform fitting in May, through the Schoolbelles catalog, online, or at the local Schoolbelles store. Schoolbelles cannot guarantee delivery of clothing items for the start of school if they are purchased just before the start of school. Physical education uniforms are purchased through the school at the beginning of the school year to allow for summer growth spurts!
- Gently used, clean, uniform pieces are accepted at the Greenwald Site. Items are sorted and sent to Community Clothes Closet for resale throughout the year and summer. Passing on uniforms from family to other family does not mean that the uniform piece will be acceptable the next school year.

Daily School Uniform

All school uniforms are to be purchased only from Schoolbelles and all physical education uniforms are purchased from Tees N Tops. While other companies make school uniform pieces, they are acceptable only if they match the Schoolbelles design and color and are purchased at the risk of not being permitted.

- **Options for Boys:**

- Navy or khaki uniform trousers, flat or pleated fronts, from Schoolbelles
- Navy or khaki uniform shorts from Schoolbelles only
- White oxford shirts or red, white, or navy banlon shirts with a collar, or turtlenecks , or the banlon shirts with bottom band that do not need to be tucked into the slacks. Any shirt can be monogrammed with the school logo and turtlenecks may be monogrammed by Schoolbelles with “MQA”. These banlon polo shirts are not form fitting.
- Navy or red uniform sweaters or vests from Schoolbelles (may be monogrammed by Schoolbelles with logo). All sweaters are to have a banlon or oxford shirt underneath
- Red or navy MQA sweatshirts and/or the MQA monogrammed hoodie from Tees N Tops with a uniform shirt underneath
- Tennis shoes or tennis type shoes are to be worn with the school uniform. Shoes are solid black, white, beige, brown, gray, navy (not royal blue). They may be a combination of these colors, too. (For example white with black trim and gray accents.) Tennis shoes with accents of red are permitted. The shoe itself is not red.
- Boots (see shoe colors) are permitted to be worn from November 1st to March 30th only.
- Socks are solid colors of navy, red, white, black, or khaki.

- **Options for Girls:**

- Plaid or navy drop waist uniform jumper with two box pleats from Schoolbelles
- Plaid uniform skirt with box pleats from Schoolbelles
- Plaid adjustable kilt from Schoolbelles
- Plaid uniform **skort** with elastic in waist from Schoolbelles
- Navy or khaki uniform slacks, flat/low rise or pleated fronts, from Schoolbelles
- Navy or khaki uniform shorts from Schoolbelles
- White blouses/oxford shirts or red, white, or navy banlon shirts with a collar, or turtlenecks (any shirt can be monogrammed with the school logo and turtlenecks may be monogrammed by Schoolbelles with “MQA”). These banlon polo shirts are **not** form fitting.
- Navy or red uniform sweaters or vests from Schoolbelles (may be monogrammed by Schoolbelles with logo). All sweaters are to have a banlon or oxford shirt or a blouse underneath.
- Red or navy MQA sweatshirts and/or monogrammed hoodie from Tees N Tops with a uniform shirt underneath
- Tennis shoes or tennis type shoes are to be worn with the school uniform. Shoes are to be white, black, brown, gray, navy or tan. They may be a combination of these colors, too. (For example white with black trim and gray accents.) Tennis shoes with accents of red are permitted. The shoe itself is not red.
- Other shoes are to be flat, not having a wedge or a raised heel. No sandals or sling backs, clogs, or flip flops are permitted.
- Boots (see shoe colors) are permitted to be worn from November 1st to March 30th only.
- Socks and footed tights are solid colors of navy, red, white, black, or khaki.

Physical Education Uniform

- Physical education uniforms of navy shorts, gray T-shirts, and navy sweatpants for cold days from Tees N Tops. Tennis shoes must be worn to school for physical education class. **These are to follow the same rules as the school tennis shoes.**

All uniform regulations and guidelines are subject to the discretion of the principal and staff.

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

In schools, knowing who carries an infectious disease and what germ may be present is not always possible. Persons with infections do not always have outward signs and often are not aware of being infected. However, there are precautions that can be taken at schools that will help protect from infectious diseases. These protections will protect staff and students from many infectious diseases, and result in fewer illnesses.

- Wash your hands with soap and running water at regular times during the workday. Common infectious diseases may be contracted from dirt and waste encountered in the work place.
- Avoid punctures with objects that may contain blood from others.
- Handle discharges from another person's body (particularly body fluids containing blood) with gloves and wash hands thoroughly with soap and running water when you are finished.
- Carefully dispose of trash that contains body waste and sharp objects. Use special containers with plastic liners for disposal of refuse that contains blood or for any spills that may contain blood. For disposal of sharp objects, use containers that cannot be broken or penetrated. Do not bend, break, or recap needles.
- Promptly remove another person's blood and body waste from your skin by washing with soap and running water.
- Clean surfaces that have blood or body waste containing blood on them with an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) approved disinfectant or a 1:10 solution of household bleach and water. (The solution should be fresh daily to ensure proper strength.)
- Have a vaccination for protection from hepatitis B if you are in contact with developmentally delayed students, or if you are a school nurse.
- If you are responsible for administering first aid to others or may be placed in a position where you may give first aid, obtain current instruction in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Current instruction will include modification of first aid needed to protect the rescuer from infection.

VISITORS

Visitors to Mary Queen of Apostles School are invited to the school by teachers as guest speakers or experts. At times families interested in learning about Mary Queen of Apostles School tour with the principal or designee. In addition, parents are admitted for a specific educational purpose or to tend to a medical need of a child. All visitors are to enter the site through the main door with the knowledge of the secretary or principals. All visitors follow the following procedures:

- Sign in and wear a badge for their visit
- Report to the assigned area in accordance with the purpose of the visit
- Report to the main door and provide the office staff with the following information:
 1. Name and purpose of the visit
 2. Name of person you are seeing
 3. Provide identification on request
- Do not ask any child, volunteer, parent, or staff member to give you entry to the building by opening a secured door. Wait for the office staff or the teacher you are visiting to let you into the building.

VOLUNTEERS

All parents are expected to actively support the Catholic school in which their child is enrolled. Families are expected to contribute to the volunteer base at MQA. A minimum of 10 hours per year is requested of all families.

Volunteering may include but is not limited to:

- Chairing and serving on major fundraising committees and working these events
- Serving as an Officer in the School Community Group (SCG)
- Volunteering for cafeteria kitchen duty regularly
- Chairing or co-chairing an SCG committee
- Coaching sports teams
- Working with development and enrollment initiatives

Teachers may also use parents with clearances to serve as party organizers and chaperones for class trips. The same rules and regulations apply for such parent roles.

Those interested in volunteering can complete an interest form found on the school web site or can call the office. Volunteers are organized by the school, the teachers, and the School Community Group (SCG).

Volunteers are to be mindful of their role. Talking to teachers, other adults, and attending to individual or groups of children limits the effectiveness of the volunteer. General rules for volunteers include:

- Signing in at the office and wearing an identification badge
- Remaining in the assigned area
- Attending to all children, being present physically and mentally

All volunteers at Mary Queen of Apostles School are required to have active clearances and trainings. Volunteers who work with or supervise children when participating in class parties, chaperoning field trips, coaching, serving as advisors or moderators, or who are present in the school day for other reasons, and those volunteering with activities of the School Community Group need to apply clearances and complete online trainings. These clearances are free for volunteers and can be obtained online.

- Diocesan Code of Conduct
- PA Mandated Reporter Training
- VIRTUS Training
- PA Criminal History Check Form - every five years

- PA Child Abuse Form - every five years
- FBI Fingerprint Check - every five years **OR** Affidavit - every five years for those who have resided in Pennsylvania for 10 years or more. MQA has a notary at the Greenwald Site.
- ACT 24 Clearance

If you are applying for the FBI Fingerprint Clearance, please use the following service code 1KG6Y3 when registering for your fingerprints. The current system for reviewing fingerprints and accessing the report is IdentiGo.

A link to all the clearances and trainings is found on our school web site under Family Resources, Volunteer. Our Volunteer Clearances and Training Quick Links provides direct access to the online sites for obtaining the clearances and delivering the trainings. Retain a personal copy of your clearances and training certificates. Send a complete set of the clearances and certificates to the school. **Please wait until all documents are ready before sending these items to the office.** Place in a sealed envelope and address the envelope to the principal or administrative assistant.

Coaches have a list of items that must be on file in addition to the items mentioned above. This includes concussion training, cardiac arrest awareness, and completion of “Play Like a Champion” training. These certificates and forms are submitted to the office. Email or call the Athletic Director for more information.

WEATHER EMERGENCIES AND SCHOOL CLOSINGS

In case of severe weather conditions or any other emergencies School Messenger will send an alert via phone, text, and email announcing the change. Announcements will also be made over KDKA (radio and TV), WPXI (radio, TV and web site), WTAE television, and the school web site’s homepage www.mqaschool.org under the NEWS section. Mary Queen of Apostles School will have its own announcement of delays and closings.

Delays and Closings

- If school is delayed, follow your own school district’s bus schedule, or if possible and safe, bring your child to school following Mary Queen of Apostles School’s schedule for the day.
- Attendance and tardiness for the day is based on Mary Queen of Apostles School’s schedule for the day and not on the sending districts’ schedule. Students from districts who delay when MQA does not, will have an excused, bus tardy code that will mean a tardy on the report card. Students from districts who close school when MQA does not, will have an excused absence. When both the school district and Mary Queen of Apostles School call for a delay, students are not considered tardy.
- Students should be prepared for all class regardless of the start time, since each period/class of the day will meet.

The calendar will be adjusted to reflect the loss of a day’s instruction due to closings. Days are made up according to the schedule found on the school calendar.

Early Dismissals Due

In the event of an emergency early dismissal due to inclement or severe weather alerts, Mary Queen of Apostles School may call for an early dismissal.

If an early dismissal is called by New Kensington Arnold SD due to inclement weather, Mary Queen of Apostles will also dismiss early. The announcement will be broadcast on School Messenger, WTAE, WPXI, and KDKA. **IMPORTANT NOTICE:** If your school district calls for an early dismissal, and MQA/NKA does not, your children will be dismissed if they are bus riders according to the information provided on the emergency card.

Dismissal procedures will follow your district of residence's decision as to time of release if your child is a bus rider. Please review with your child the protocol for dismissal instituted by the school and the options indicated by you as listed on the emergency card.

When an early dismissal is called, and your children are not bus riders, *or you call to change their dismissal from bus to car*, follow these directives.

1. Each child's dismissal is determined by the options listed on the Emergency Card, which is completed annually by parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year.
2. Car riders and Extended Day students will be dismissed as their parents/guardians or a responsible person arrives at the site.
3. Follow these procedures:
 - a. Gain entrance to the school using the main entrance only by ringing the bell and identifying yourself.
 - b. Report to the office and check in with administrative staff.
 - c. Report to the cafeteria and remain there. Do not let others into the building for any reason.
 - d. The children in your charge will be brought to you by a staff member.
 - e. A sign out sheet will be used indicating person collecting child and child(ren) released.

WEAPONS

Possession of Weapons on School Grounds

No person other than public officers in uniform in the exercise of their duties shall bring any weapon as defined in Section 912 of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, 18 Pa C.S. § 912, onto school grounds or in any school building or vehicle even if they have a legal permit to carry such weapon.

Non-school personnel or students who violate this policy shall be prosecuted as trespassers.

Weapons

The Diocese recognizes the importance of a safe school environment to the educational process. Possession of weapons in the school environment is a threat to the safety of students and staff and is prohibited by law.

The school reserves the right to search anything brought on school property.

Definitions

Weapon: the term shall include, but not be limited to, any knife, cutting instrument, cutting tool, nunchaku stick, brass or metal knuckles, firearm, shotgun, rifle, bb or pellet gun, look-alike gun, chemical agent, explosive device, and/or any other tool, instrument or implement capable of inflicting serious bodily injury.

Possession: a student is in possession of a weapon when the weapon is found on the person of the student; in the student's locker; under the student's control while she/he is on school property, on

property being used by the school, at any school function or activity, at any school event held away from the school; or while the student is on her/his way to or from school.

Authority

The Diocese prohibits possession of weapons and replicas of weapons in any school building, on school property, at any school sponsored activity and in any conveyance providing transportation to school or a school sponsored activity.

The Diocese may expel for a period of not less than one (1) year any student who violates this weapons policy. Such expulsion shall be given in conformance with formal expulsion proceedings of the Diocese. The Superintendent may recommend discipline short of expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

In the case of an exceptional student, the Superintendent shall take all necessary steps to comply with the *Individuals with Disabilities Act*.

Delegation of Responsibility

The principal shall report the discovery of any weapon prohibited by this policy to the student's parents.

The principal will refer the matter to police, if in the sole discretion of the school administration, such a referral is appropriate.

After a review of the facts concerning the particular incident, and in consultation with the Superintendent of Catholic Schools, the administration of the school will decide upon the appropriate disciplinary measure to be taken.

Guidelines

An exception to this policy may be made by the Superintendent, who shall prescribe special conditions or procedures to be followed.

Weapons under the control of law enforcement personnel are permitted.

WELLNESS POLICY

The vision for Catholic education in the Diocese of Greensburg is one where the environment of every school physically, mentally, morally, spiritually, and socially nurtures children to feel and be secure and loved, to love and respect themselves as children of God, to love and care for one another, and to love coming to school and learning, doing, and succeeding.

The schools in the Diocese of Greensburg recognize that wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. Research continues to support the inextricable links between student health, behavior, and academic achievement. Schools that exemplify healthy eating and physical activity strongly influence the development of sound lifetime habits, preferences, and practices for good, all-around health.

To ensure the health and well-being of all students, the Office for Catholic Schools establishes that the schools in the Diocese of Greensburg shall provide to students:

- A comprehensive nutritional program consistent with federal and state requirements.
- Access at reasonable cost to foods and beverages that meet established nutrition guidelines.

- Physical education courses and opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day.
- Curriculum programs for grades K-12 that are designed to educate students about proper nutrition and lifelong physical activity, in accordance with Pennsylvania curriculum regulations and academic standards.
- Nutrition education will be provided within the sequential, comprehensive health education program in accordance with curriculum regulations and the academic standards for Health, Safety, and Physical Education.
- Nutrition education shall teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Promoting student health and nutrition enhances readiness for learning and increases student achievement. Nutrition education shall provide all students with the knowledge and skills needed to lead healthy lives.

RIGHT TO AMEND

Mary Queen of Apostles School reserves the right to amend this Handbook.

