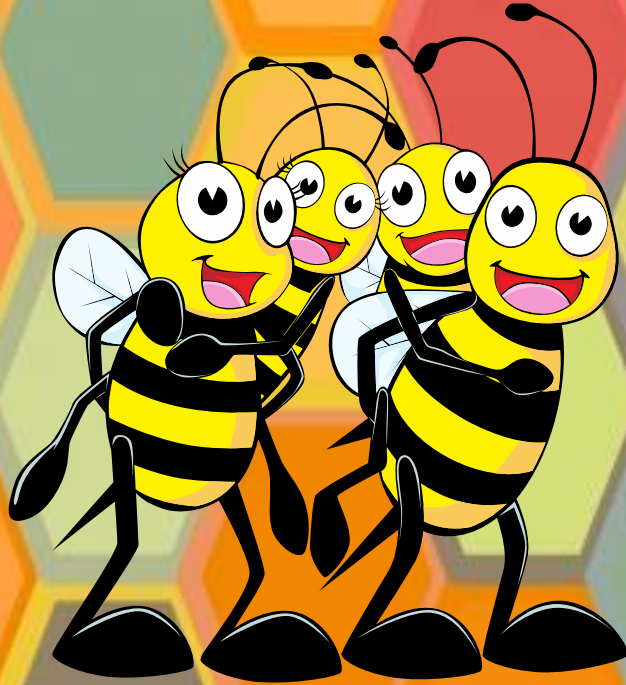


St. Mary's Magnet Academy  
Magnet Academy  
Student/Parent Handbook



“Where Greatness is the Expectation”

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

St. Mary's  
Video and Communication Technology  
Magnet Academy  
“Where Greatness is the Expectation”

Student/Parent Handbook  
2022-2023

**Ms. LaTonya Hamilton, Principal**  
[Hamilton.latonya@muscogee.k12.ga.us](mailto:Hamilton.latonya@muscogee.k12.ga.us)

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**4408 St. Marys Road**  
**Columbus, Georgia 31907**  
**Phone: 706-683-8841**  
**Cell: 706-683-8847**

<http://sites.muscogee.k12.ga.us/stmary/>

The handbook was developed in compliance with the policies of the Muscogee County School District (MCS D). The MCS D Policies are available at:  
<https://simblieboard.eboardsolutions.com/index.aspx?S=4121>



## FROM THE DESK OF THE PRINCIPAL:

Dear Parents and Students,

I am extremely honored to be the Proud Principal of St. Mary's Video and Communication Technology Magnet Academy for the 2022-2023 school year. This school year, I am looking forward to the opportunity to work with you and your child to provide great classroom instruction. The mission of St. Mary's is to inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.



I am a firm believer that **ALL** students can learn. For this reason, the administration, teachers, and support staff will work diligently to ensure your child becomes a confident learner by providing each student with a great educational experience. In order to have a successful year, we need support from parents, the faculty and staff. By working together, I am certain that our students will reach their academic and behavioral goals.

Parents please prepare your child for the 2022-2023 school year by ensuring that they are on time to school every day ready to learn. This handbook was designed to keep you informed of St. Mary's policies and other pertinent information. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Again, I look forward to working with you and your children. Let's make this a great year!

Respectfully,

Ms. LaTonya Hamilton



**Muscogee County School District  
Mission Statement**

*The mission of the Muscogee County School District is to inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.*

**Muscogee County School District  
Vision**

*The Muscogee County School District is a beacon of educational excellence where all are known, valued, and inspired.*

**Muscogee County School District  
Values**

*MCS D FOSTERS A HEALTHY ORGANIZATION WHERE...*

- **WE** embrace equity and diversity
  - **WE** hold ourselves and other to the same high standards
  - **WE** commit to continuous learning and improvement
  - **WE** treat everyone with dignity and respect
- ... as **WE** serve the needs of others.

## SCHOOL CREST



## SCHOOL MOTTO

**“WHERE GREATNESS IS THE EXPECTATION”**

## SCHOOL and UNIFORM COLORS:

Shirts - Red, White, Navy, or  
Gray  
Pants/Dresses/Skirts - Khaki  
black, and Navy Blue

## SCHOOL MASCOT

The “Stingers”



**Buzzy**

## THE ST. MARYS’ PLEDGE

I will act in such a way that I will be proud of myself  
And others will be proud of me too.  
I came to school to learn  
And I will learn  
I will have a great day!

**OFFICE HOURS**

7:30 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

**CLINIC HOURS**

9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. (Monday - Thursday)

9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (Friday)

**FACULTY & STAFF HOURS**

7:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**BREAKFAST**

7:15 a.m. - 7:45 a.m.

**STUDENTS ENTER THE CLASSROOM**

7:45 a.m. - 8:00 a.m.

**SCHOOL BEGINS**

8:00 a.m.

**SCHOOL ENDS**

2:30 p.m.

**\*\* Only Muscogee County School District employees will be allowed inside the building from 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. unless you have a scheduled appointment.**

**\* No student should arrive to school before 7:15 a.m. There will be no supervision for students that arrive prior to 7:15 a.m.**

**EYC (Columbus State University)**

**AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM for 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students**

2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Monday – Thursdays

Telephone: 706-225-4640

# ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

**ARRIVAL** - Members of the St. Marys' faculty and staff begin morning duty at 7:15 a.m. For your child's safety, do not allow your child to arrive before 7:15 a.m. unless involved in a school-related activity.

**DISMISSAL** - Preparation for the next school day and scheduled meetings begin at 2:45 p.m. For your child's safety, do not allow your child to remain at school after 2:45 p.m. unless enrolled in the Columbus State EYC program, or involved in a school-related activity. As a courtesy we will attempt to contact the emergency contacts listed on the child's registration form.

***If we are unable to reach anyone, we will follow district protocol which is to call either Muscogee County Department of Family Services or the Columbus Police Department.***

**The Fire Marshal requires that the hallways are clear in order to keep the students safe. We ask all parents escorting a child that walk home to wait outside of the building at dismissal. All teachers will escort their classes to designated checkpoint areas when announcements are made. No student will be released prior to that time unless checked out through the office before 2:00 p.m.**

Each student is given a color-coded book bag tag that indicates how he/she will get home each day. The information is taken from the registration form completed by the parent/guardian.

**It is important that each student takes responsibility in caring for their tag.** Each student is to show their tag to the St. Marys' staff persons who are in the designated areas.

## **CAR RIDERS**

At St. Mary's Magnet Academy, one of our top priorities is student safety. We have designed the following procedures to keep your child safe while making it as convenient as possible for you to drop-off and/or pick-up your child.

### **ARRIVAL:**

- **All car riders must use the McCartha Drive entrance when arriving to school. If students are dropped off in an unauthorized area (unsafe area) the proper school authorities will be notified. This will be strictly enforced.**
- Students may not be dropped off before 7:15 a.m. Students are **NOT** allowed to be left in the arrival area before the arrival timeframes. Faculty and staff will **NOT** be present in the arrival areas before 7:15 a.m. ***Students dropped off prior to 7:15 a.m. will be reported to the proper school authorities. This will be strictly enforced.***
- The gate will be closed at 8:00 a.m. At 8:01 a.m. students are considered tardy. Any students arriving after this time is considered **tardy** and must be signed in by a parent and/or guardian. **This will be strictly enforced.**

## DISSIMISAL:

- All students will be picked up from the loop located by the gym on McCartha Drive. Car riders must line up traveling north towards St. Mary's Road on McCartha Drive. When exiting the bus loop vehicles will be required to turn right from 2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Only buses and vans will be permitted in the front of the parking lot of the school prior to 2:45 p.m. After 2:45 p.m., all students must be picked up from the front office and parent and/or guardian must sign the child out with proper identification. ***If the following procedures are not followed, school security will be notified. This will be strictly enforced.***
- Parents and/or Guardians are issued tags, which are hung from the rear view mirror or placed in the front window. Car numbers are issued during verification day before school begins. Parents must have a car number displayed in order to pick up their child. Please have car tags clearly visible to help assist with a speedy dismissal. Also please note, if you do not have a car tag you will have to go to the main office, park in a parking space, and visit the main office for security purposes (this is to keep your child safe). All parent/guardian (s) must show proper I.D.
- As cars arrive, the teacher/monitor calls out the number hanging from the rearview mirror. As the student comes forward, the monitor checks the student's tag with the car pass number to make sure they match. The student is then walked to the car/van.

Please note the following:

- *Parents are not permitted to pick up children from the door; they are to instead wait inside their cars in the dismissal line until their child comes out of the building. If a parent leaves the vehicle a warning will be given by the monitors or school administration. Second offense could lead to authorities being called.*
- *School ends at 2:30 p.m. Students are to be picked up no later than 2:45 p.m.*

**\* Student consistently picked up late will be referred to the Department of Family and Children Services.**

## Diagram for Car Riders Arrival and Dismissal



Car riders will be dropped off and picked up at the rear of the school.



## **WALKERS**

**ARRIVAL** - Students walking to and from school are expected to walk along the sidewalk to the crossing guard, crossing at the crosswalk. School behavior polices are strictly enforced to and from school.

**DISMISSAL** - Students who walk home with a sibling will meet school-based monitor in the breezeway located between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade building. Monitors will escort the students to the crossing guard. *Parents walking with students in the afternoon must meet his or her student (s) at their crosswalk.*

## **BUS & VAN RIDERS**

Students will receive a color-coded book bag tag that identifies what bus or van they ride each day. Please be sure that your child keeps the tag attached to his or her book bag so we can know their mode of transportation. When called, they will assemble in the cafeteria. Members of the St. Marys' staff will escort them to their bus or van.

## **Diagram for Bus/Van Arrival and Dismissal**



Bus and vans  
drivers will drop  
off and pick up  
students at the  
front of the  
school.

## **AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

When called, students who are registered to attend the after-school program will assemble in the art room after bus and van riders are dismissed.

## **ALTERNATE/EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS OF DISMISSAL**

Parents/Guardians need to send a note to school when there will be alternate arrangements for after school. For example, if your child is a car rider instead of taking the bus, or walking home instead of being a car rider you must send a note stating the change. Changes will not be permitted over the phone for safety reasons.

**When an emergency or unexpected situation occurs, parents need to call the office and speak to the school secretary.**

**The safety of St. Mary's Magnet Academy students is our top priority!**

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire and disaster drills are necessary and should be taken seriously at all times. These drills will be held at irregular and unannounced intervals. All signals and procedures are rehearsed with students to provide the safest actions in the case of an emergency. In case Muscogee County is placed under a TORNADO WARNING, we ask that parents NOT come to pick up students or call the school during the WARNING. Emergency procedures will be followed. Shelter areas have been assigned to each classroom and all St. Mary's personnel know what to do in an emergency. The driveway in front of the school and the telephone line must both be clear for emergency use during a tornado WARNING. In the event of a "lockdown" no one will enter or leave the building until it is determined safe by school officials and/or law enforcement. The MCSD and St. Mary's have emergency/crisis management plans in place. ***If in the building during a drill, visitors are expected to follow drill procedures. Parents and visitors will not be permitted to enter the building during practice drills.***

## TELEPHONE

Students may use the telephone in the office **only** when there is an emergency. Students will not be allowed to call their parents at the end of a regular school day to arrange for a ride home.

## VISITORS

Visitors to St. Mary's Magnet Academy are always welcome! ***Prior to signing in through the main office please be sure to park in designated parking spaces/areas. All yellow curbed areas are reserved for emergency vehicles only. Visitors in these areas are subject to ticketing.*** To ensure a safe environment, it is necessary to come to the front office first to sign in at the computer and receive a visitor's pass. At the end of the visit, it is necessary to be signed out on the computer. Please do not enter the building except through the front doors, check-in according to established policies and procedures. School aged children from other schools in Muscogee County School District or out of town schools and other visitors are not allowed in the building during the school day. Students are not allowed to bring friends or relatives to the school (even if they are from out of town) except for special events with special permission. This must be approved by the principal 24 hours prior to the event.

## VOLUNTEERS

We welcome all school volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering at our school, please contact your child's teacher. Volunteers are required to register with the principal or designee and attend a volunteer orientation which includes the School Volunteer Code of Ethics, Privacy Concerns and Procedures. This is required of ALL school volunteers, including PTA and Partners in Education volunteers.

# DRESS CODE

St. Mary’s Magnet Academy has a school-wide dress code policy for the 2022-2023 school year. Our school’s mission reflects that our students’ primary focus during the school day is learning. We know that when students dress in a uniform, they are proud of how they look, display more school spirit, and learning is enhanced. In addition, uniforms contribute positively to students’ behavior and thereby minimizing discipline infractions. We noticed significant improvement in academics and behavior with the school uniform policy at St. Mary’s Magnet Academy. The uniform dress code consists of polo shirts in the spring and summer and turtle necks during the fall and winter. Shorts are permitted during the warm months; however, they must be knee length. Outlined below is the school uniform daily schedule:

	Shirt Color	Pants Color
<b>Monday</b>	WHITE or NAVY BLUE or RED or GRAY	KHAKI or NAVY BLUE or BLACK
<b>Tuesday</b>	WHITE or NAVY BLUE or RED or GRAY	KHAKI or NAVY BLUE or BLACK
<b>Wednesday</b>	WHITE or NAVY BLUE or RED or GRAY	KHAKI or NAVY BLUE or BLACK
<b>Thursday</b>	WHITE or NAVY BLUE or RED or GRAY	KHAKI or NAVY BLUE or BLACK
<b>Friday</b>	WHITE or NAVY BLUE or RED or GRAY	KHAKI or NAVY BLUE or BLACK

**\*SMMA spirit shirts can be worn on any day with uniform bottoms.**

**Dress down days will be designated throughout the school year. For dress down days, students must wear a St. Mary’s t-shirt with blue jeans.**

## GUIDELINES FOR DRESS CODE

It is not the intent of Muscogee County School District to dictate the quality or style of clothing worn, but rather an effort to encourage good habits and acceptable group behavior. Student dress and personal appearance should reflect dignity and pride in oneself and in the school. Therefore, a student shall not dress, groom or wear emblems, insignias, badges or other symbols where the effect thereof is to distract unreasonably the attention of other students or otherwise cause disruption or interference with the operation of the school.

It is prohibited for any student to wear clothing items which advertise alcoholic beverages, sex, tobacco, obscene, crude or suggestive messages or use of profanity. Designs or insignias that are part of a haircut, satanic symbols, gang-related badges, insignias and colors, logos or symbols with denigrate social or ethnic groups are also prohibited. “Fake alcohol or drug advertisement” is also prohibited. Clothing should never be too tight and/or revealing

### **Please keep in mind:**

- When students wear “low rider” pants/jeans/skirts and sit down, the pants become even lower exposing part of the body that should not be seen.
- When skirts and/or dresses are too short or too tight, they go up when the girl sits down.
- For safety reasons, students should not wear flip-flops especially when they have activities that require them to run.
- No excessive oversized clothing is allowed.
- Pajamas may not be worn to school.
- Blankets are not permitted at school.
- Clothing items which advertise alcoholic beverages, sex, tobacco, obscene, crude suggestive messages, or use profanity or slurs pertaining to race, gender, ethnicity, religion or national origins are prohibited. Designs or insignias that are part of a haircut, satanic symbols, gang-related badges, insignias and colors, or logos or symbols which denigrate social or ethnic groups are also prohibited. “Fake” or alcohol or drug advertisement is also disallowed.

### **SHIRTS/Blouses**

Shirts are to be solid color. They may be red, white or navy blue with a collar.

*Shirts must be tucked in at all times.*

- No undergarments are to be worn as outer garments.
- No tank tops, spaghetti straps, tube tops, see-through shirts allowed.
- No logos/emblems (Nike, Izod, Polo etc.) larger than a quarter are allowed.
- No midriffs should be exposed (including when arms are raised)
- No hoodies
- No solid white t-shirts or undershirts
- No see-through shirts/blouses
- Nothing that advocates drugs, sex, alcohol, violence, gangs, hate, or profanity

### **PANTS**

Students may wear khaki or navy shorts, pants, capris, skirts, skorts, or jumpers.

- Pants are to be worn above the waist, **NO sagging**

- **Leggings must be worn under a skirt or dress, no belt is required**

- **No see-through pants**
- If pants have a loop, a belt is required; No camouflage
- **Pants with holes are not to be worn (even if leggings are worn under the pants)**

### **DRESSES AND SKIRTS**

- Dresses and skirts may be worn with the length no higher than three inches above the top of the knee. If in doubt, stand up straight and stretch your fingers out. If you touch skin, the item is too short. Tights or leggings must be accompanied by a top or dress no shorter than three (3) inches above the top of the knee.

### **SHORTS**

- Shorts may be worn that are not shorter than three inches above the knee.
- **Athletic shorts may not be worn during the school day.**

## SHOES

For safety concerns, all shoes (boys and girls) need to be rubber-soled with enclosed toes and heels; tennis shoes preferred.

- **NO** flip flops, slides, crocs, bedroom shoes, and high heels permitted.

- No head coverings, i.e. bandanas, do rags, sweat bands, hats, or caps are to be worn or permitted inside the building. Hats from hooded garments must be removed inside of the building as well. Exceptions are made for special circumstances or to meet medical needs.

## COATS

### Color of your choice

- Coats/heavyweight jackets are not to be worn in the building.
- Lightweight jackets or sweaters may be worn in the building; however, they must be solid school colors.
- Hooded garments may be worn to school as long as the hoods are not worn indoors.

## JEWELRY

- No jewelry with reference to gangs, drugs, hate, violence, or sex is allowed.
- Items such as chains on a belt, wallet, etc. and items with spikes are not permitted.
- Jewelry, when worn, should not distract the learning environment.
- The school is not responsible for stolen or damaged items.

## HEADGEAR

*The administration reserves the right to determine proper dress and take necessary action at any time.*

# A

## TTENDANCE

### CHECK IN PROCEDURES

All students are required to be in their classrooms and seated by 8:00 a.m. **The parent or guardian must report to the front office to check in his or her child when arriving to school after the tardy bell (8:00 AM).** *Prior to entering the school, please be sure to park in a designated parking space or area in the main parking lot. All yellow curbed areas are reserved emergency vehicles only. Visitors in these areas are subject to ticketing.*

### TARDINESS

**Unexcused Tardies** – Students accumulating three (3) days of unexcused tardies will receive a phone call from the teacher or office staff/automatic calling system to the parent.

**Continued Unexcused Tardies** – Student accumulating five (5) tardies will be referred to the principal or the principal's designee for being tardy and a required mandatory parent conference and counselor referral. Consequences may include detention or other actions in accordance with local school system policy.

**Ten or More Days Tardy** – Students accumulating ten (10) or more tardies will be referred to the Social Worker and to support agencies outside the school system, as the principal deems appropriate. Among these agencies are the Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS), law enforcement, Juvenile Court, Family Connection, or other external agencies.

## **ABSENCES**

The Compulsory Attendance Law O.C.G.A. §20-2-690.1 continues to be in effect for the current academic year, which pertains to every school district in Georgia. The Compulsory Attendance Law states “children between their sixth and sixteenth birthday shall enroll and attend a public school, a private school, or a home study program”. If a child is under 6 years of age and has attended more than 20 days in a public school, he/she is then subject to this law. The law also provides “penalties for parent(s), guardian(s), or other person residing in Georgia who are in violation of O.C.G.A §20-2-690.1; which are imposed at the discretion of the court having jurisdiction”. Each day's violation of this law, after the School District has notified the parent, guardian, or other person in charge of a child having five unexcused absences from school, shall constitute a separate offense subjecting the person notified to the following measures:

1. Fine of not less than \$25 and not greater than \$100
2. Imprisonment not to exceed 30 days
3. Community service
4. Any combination of the above penalties

**Students may be absent from school only five (5) days per school year. Students arriving after 12:00 noon or checking out prior to 12:00 noon will be considered absent for the day.**

### **Excused Absences and Makeup Work**

Students may be temporarily excused from school (1) who are personally ill and whose attendance in school would endanger their health or the health of others; (2) in whose immediate family there is a serious illness or death which would reasonably necessitate absence from school; (3) on special and recognized religious holidays observed by their faith; (4) when mandated by order of governmental agencies (e.g. court order), or upon principal's approval based on the merit of the request in advance.

Students may be excused from school attendance when prevented from such attendance due to conditions rendering school attendance impossible or hazardous to their health or safety.

**In order for an absence to be “excused”; a note must be brought from the parent or guardian stating the reason for the absence. This note must be brought to the teacher or other designated school district personnel within three (3) school days of the student's return to school.**

**Examples of acceptable notes:** doctor's excuse, copy of court order, note from parent regarding illness.

**Additional verification may be required for absences deemed excessive and problematic.**

**Unexcused Absences**

Unexcused absences to include, failure to attend school for reasons other than those specifically excused by the administration. Unexcused absences shall include but not be limited to the following: (1) oversleeping; (2) missing the bus; (3) baby-sitting; (4) family vacation; (5) skipping school and cutting classes.

**The school year is 180 days. According to Muscogee County School District Policy, a student who misses more than fifteen days may be retained in his/her present grade for the next school year.**

**PROCEDURES RELATED TO EXCESSIVE ABSENCES**

Parents will be notified in writing by the principal and/or social worker when a child is excessively absent. Letters will be sent home at the following intervals:

**Three (3) unexcused absences.** The school sends a letter to the parent notifying them of the unexcused absences. Students with 3 unexcused absences shall be referred to the school counselor for remediation. This process may include a conference with the student and/or their parent, legal guardian, or other person having charge. The student's attendance is monitored by the Attendance Team.

*The school social worker will be involved after the 3<sup>rd</sup> unexcused absence.*

**Five (5) unexcused absences.** A referral to the School Social Worker is initiated after five (5) unexcused absences. The School Social Worker sends a letter to the parent. In some cases, a "Request for Services" form may be required to address non-attendance related issues. **At five (5) unexcused absences, the student is considered truant under Georgia law.**

**Seven (7) unexcused absences.** The School Social Worker contacts the parent by letter or phone. Conferences will be held with the Principal, Assistant Principal, Social Worker, Counselor and/or Attendance Team, student, and parent/guardian to discuss absences and potential consequences.

**Nine (9) unexcused absences.** The School Social Worker schedules a conference with the parent or legal guardian to complete an Attendance Agreement. If the attendance concerns are not resolved, the School Social Worker sends a certified letter of intent to pursue legal actions or referral to Muscogee County Attendance Panel to the parent.

***\*The Social Worker shall monitor the daily attendance of students declared "habitually truant." When the student's unexcused absences increase at least two (2) or exceed fifteen***

*(15) days, truancy petition may be filed in the Court having jurisdiction or referred to Muscogee County Attendance Panel.*

### **HOMEBOUND SERVICES**

In cases of prolonged absences (10 or more consecutive days) due to illness or injury, the parent or guardian should seek assistance from the counselor for homebound instruction. The school will provide the parent with a Hospital/Homebound Referral Form to be completed and signed by a physician indicating that the student is unable to attend school. The form is returned to the school and then submitted to Student Services or the parent/guardian may bring the completed form to the Muscogee County Public Education Center.

### **CHECK OUT PROCEDURES**

Students are expected to remain in school for the entire day unless they have a medical/dental appointment or family emergency. **All student check outs are required to take place through the office. Only parents, guardians, or other adults listed on the “Authorization for Release of Students Form” will be allowed to sign out students.** No student will be dismissed early without an authorized person reporting to the school office. **The authorized person must present picture identification upon the time of check-out of the student. Prior to entering the school, please be sure to park in a designated parking space or area in the main parking lot. All yellow curbed areas are reserved emergency vehicles only. Visitors in these areas are subject to ticketing.**

*Per MCSD policy, students should not be checked out the last thirty minutes of the school day through the office which is between 2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. unless a request is made in writing at least 24 hours prior to the appointment due to buses entering the school and traffic congestion. It is a very busy time in the office with calling of buses and vans. If an emergency arises, you must speak to the principal and/or designee.*

**Visitations will not be allowed in the classrooms between 2:00 - 2:30 unless you have a scheduled appointment so that faculty and staff can complete the instructional day and prepare the students for dismissal.**

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS**

### **Birthday Celebrations:**

Students will not be allowed to have a classroom birthday party during school hours as this interferes with instructional time.

**Birthday Invitations:** Birthday invitations must be distributed before or after school. Students are not allowed to distribute birthday invitations in the classroom.



# GRADING

Muscogee County School District uses a traditional reporting system for academic grades for all 1<sup>st</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. Kindergarten students will receive a GKIDS report card which is standards based.

St. Mary's operates on a nine weeks academic grading period. At the midterm of a nine weeks period, each student will receive a midterm progress report. Report cards are issued to students at the end of each nine weeks period. Students are to return the signed report card cover to their homeroom teacher.

The grading scale approved by the Muscogee County School District for academics is as follows:

## **Kindergarten**

M-Meets Standard

P-In Progress

N-Needs Improvement

X-Not Assessed

## **1<sup>st</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> Grade**

A = 100-90 (excellent progress)

B = 89-80 (above average progress)

C = 79-70 (average progress)

F = 69-0 (unsatisfactory progress/failure)

## **CHROME BOOKS**

All students have been issued a Chromebook (to include Case and Charger) to use during the school day. Students must be responsible for their Chromebook/Case/Charger at all times. In an effort to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, students must be responsible for the care of their Chromebook and not damage it in any way. Chromebooks are to be carried in a case at all times when not in use. Students who damage Chromebooks and/or accessories can be assessed a replacement fee as per Board (see MCSD Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges).

## **PARENT PORTAL**

The parent portal is a secure online information site that allows parents to access their child's attendance, assignments, and grades. Only parents and guardians designated with legal rights to student records may receive a Parent Portal account. Each parent/guardian, with such rights, will receive their own separate account. Accounts are NOT shared among more than one parent/guardian.

In order for a parent to receive his/her unique Activation Key to set up their account, they must first verify their child's information.

For security purposes, parents are asked to pick up their Activation Key from the school and be prepared to show a picture ID. A series of workshops will be held to distribute Activation Keys and assist in setting up accounts.

## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

We welcome and encourage parent/teacher conferences here at St. Mary's Magnet Academy. Conferences should be scheduled before or after school hours so as not to interfere with instructional time. Parents may notify their child's teacher by contacting the school office. *No parent/teacher conferences will be allowed during student drop off and pick-up.*

## CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Parents are welcomed to observe in their child's classroom. Prior arrangements must be made with the administration at least 24 hours in advance. ***This will be strictly enforced.*** Once the arrangement is made, the parent (s) need to check-in through the main office. ***As a guide, we ask that parents spend no more than an hour with the child's class.*** Visitors in the classroom may affect the students' ability to focus, flow of movement, and space for instruction; therefore, we must monitor this situation with diligence.

- Register upon entering the building.
- Do not use cellular phones, cameras (still or video), tape recorders or other recording equipment.
- School aged children from other schools in Muscogee County School District or out of town schools and other visitors are not allowed in the building during the school day. Students are not allowed to bring friends or relatives to the school (even if they are from out of town) except for special events with special permission. This must be approved by the principal 24 hours prior to the event.
- Remain quiet in the designated seating area of the classroom. Interaction with students or the teacher is not permitted unless the interaction is initiated by the classroom teacher. The regular school day must continue during such visits.

## STUDENT WITHDRAWAL

Please notify the school secretary at least 48 hours in advance if you plan to withdraw your child from St. Mary's Magnet Academy. We want to give your request adequate attention. All textbooks, library books, and chrome book must be returned. Before a student's withdrawal is completed, any charges in the cafeteria, lost chrome book, lost textbook (s), and/or library fines will have to be paid. The student withdrawal form must be completed for any student withdrawing from our system transferring to another school within Muscogee County School District.

## FINES AND FEES

**Care and Use of School Property - Chromebooks, Textbooks, and Media Center Checkouts:** Students will be held responsible for the proper care of all books, supplies, Chromebooks, and accessories or equipment furnished to them by the school. A student who defaces, damages, or loses school property shall be required to pay for the damage or loss (see MCSD Board Policy JS: Student Fees, Fines, and Charges).

A Parent/Student must pay all fees and fines owed to the school in a timely fashion. Parent/Student must clear all fines or fees during the year the fines are assessed. Fines must be paid/cleared where they were assessed and before moving to the next level in school.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

Family involvement is an important component in a student's success in school. The Muscogee County Board of Education and St. Marys' faculty and staff encourage parents to become involved in their child's education to ensure the child's academic success.

### **ST. MARY'S SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The school council is a local school advisory body. The core membership is comprised of the school principal, at least two teachers (excluding employees who are parent/guardians of St. Marys' students), parents/guardians, and at least two members of the business community. Parent members must make up the majority of the council.

The school council provides advice and recommendations to the principal and the local board of education regarding a variety of issues such as student achievement goals, curriculum and instruction, school and community communications, and local school board policies. O.C.G.A 20-2-86 (f)

The school council will meet four times during the school year. The date/time, minutes, and agenda will be posted on the announcement board located in the main lobby. School council meetings are subject to the Open Meeting Act. Any member of the public may attend.

### **PARENT RESOURCE ROOM & PARENT COORDINATOR**

A parent resource room is located in the counselor's suite. Please feel free to view the items available and check them out for use at home. The contact person for the parent resource room is Mrs. Hunt-Hollis, School Counselor and Parent Contact. Her job is to aid and assist parents who may have questions about the policies and procedures of the school. Another important responsibility of hers is to plan, organize, and implement programs and workshops to help parents help their children do better in school.

### **PTA**

Members of the St. Marys' PTA join together to serve as an advocate body for all students. The PTA works with other individuals and organizations to establish projects that aid in supporting the school's mission, beliefs and goals. Parents are encouraged to join and participate in the various activities. Dues are \$7.00 per person for the year. Membership is open to parents, guardians, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers and sisters, cousins and friends of the family and/or the school.

## TITLE I FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The purpose of Title I is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards and state academic assessments. This purpose can be accomplished by affording parents substantial and meaningful opportunities to participate in the education of their children. St. Marys' Title I Family Service Coordinator will work with other individuals and organizations to establish projects that aid in supporting the school's mission beliefs and goals.

If you wish to volunteer your time and talents to support PTA/Title I events, please contact the office.

## SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAM (SNP)

**Mission Statement of the Muscogee County School Nutrition Program is to provide a nutrition program that will maintain and improve the health of school children and the educational community and encourage the development of sound nutritional habits that will foster academic success.**

**\*All students at St. Mary's Magnet Academy eat breakfast and lunch for free.**

USDA has regulations that the School Nutrition Program (SNP) has to meet to be in compliance with their guidelines. Caloric and nutrient requirements are based on age and grade. Also, MCSD Board Approved Wellness Program (EEE and EE-R) encourages and promotes healthy guidelines to be followed including, but not limited to, elimination of the consumption of fried foods, foods containing > 35 % sugar by weight, and FDA standards for portion sizes. School lunches also offer a variety of foods, whole grains, and fat free and low-fat milk choices. Muscogee County School District shall abide by nutrient standards of the School Nutrition Program for all foods sold and served on campus during the school day. The sale of foods or beverages to students on school premises other than through SNP is prohibited from 12:01 a.m. until 30 minutes after the end of the school day. Food shall not be used as a reward or punishment and shall prohibit the use of candy and other food rewards for academic performance or good behavior. **Fundraising efforts** shall be supportive of healthy eating, encouraging the sale of non-food items or nutrient dense foods. USDA regulations ban the sale of foods of minimal nutritional value.

**The USDA waivers that allowed all students across the nation to eat at not cost have ended.**

School Nutrition Program provides a healthy breakfast and lunch choice for students every day. Students may bring their own lunches from home. **Restaurant containers are not allowed in the cafeteria.** Parents are encouraged to have lunch with their children and a school lunch may be purchased to eat in the cafeteria with the students.

School meals are captured using palm scanners for identification, capturing only the image of the veins in their hand. If the parent opts out on their children being scanned, the meal will be rung up under the name.

### **COMMUNITY ELIGIBILITY PROVISION (CEP)**

The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) was established by Congress through the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, which reauthorized the Child Nutrition Programs. CEP aims to increase access to the School Meal Programs by offering breakfast and lunch at no charge to all students, without the need to process or collect individual free and reduced meal applications. 41 of our schools are CEP schools. **Please contact your student's school office or call the School Nutrition Office at (706) 748-2386 to see if your student's school is a CEP school.**

### **FREE AND REDUCED MEAL PRICED MEAL APPLICATIONS**

If your student is *not* enrolled in a CEP school, a new application has to be completed and approved every school year before your child can qualify for free or reduced meal benefits. For quicker processing, an online application is available at [www.myschoolapps.com](http://www.myschoolapps.com). If you prefer, a paper application is available upon request at your child's school or at the School Nutrition Office at 2960 Macon Road. If completing a paper application, we must receive an original since these applications are scanned. We cannot accept a faxed or copied application. **ONLY ONE** application needs to be completed for your entire household. If someone receives SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) OR TANF, you must include the current CASE number on the application (NOT the EBT or food stamp card number) and indicate whether the program is SNAP or TANF. We receive thousands of applications every year. Completed applications are processed within 10 days. A letter will be sent home from school with your child stating if you have been approved or denied. Applications **CANNOT** be approved if they are not completely filled out so please **COMPLETE ALL REQUIRED FIELDS** on the application. *Until your application is approved, please provide your child(ren) with money to purchase meals*

If you have an approved MCSD application from the previous year on file, benefits will be extended for the first 30 days of the new school year (or until a new eligibility determination is made, whichever comes first). After 30 days, your child's status will change to PAID and they will be charged for meals until a new application is approved. If your application has been denied or is incomplete, please call our office if you have any questions: 706-748-2389. Applications can be submitted at any time throughout the year, especially if your income goes down, you lose your job, your family qualifies for SNAP or TANF benefits, or there is a change in your family size. *For quicker processing of meal benefit applications, the Family Meal Application is available online at <https://www.MySchoolApps.com/>. If you prefer, you may complete a paper application at your child's school or at the School Nutrition Office located at the Muscogee County Public Education Center, 2960 Macon Road. Computers will also be available in the School Nutrition Main Office.*

## PAYING FOR SCHOOL LUNCH

Muscogee County SNP no longer accepts personal checks as payment for meals in our cafeterias. Payments may be made by cash, money order, cashier's check, traveler's check, or on-line via **our online payment system, My School Bucks**, using your credit or debit card.

Pre-pay for your child's school breakfast, lunch and a la carte food items. On-line payments include a transaction fee per school site. You must know your child's birthdate and/or Personal ID Number from Infinite Campus (available at the school office). Allow 24 hours for payments to be posted to your child's account. From the Muscogee County School District web site, on the home page, click on the Families tab, and then click on the **My School Bucks** link to access our online payment system.

### SCHOOL MEAL PRICES:

BREAKFAST PRICES	
Adult, MCSD Staff	1.75
Adult, Outside MCSD	2.00

LUNCH PRICES	
Adult, MCSD Staff	4.00
Adult, Outside MCSD	4.50

### FOOD PURCHASES

Only students purchasing a reimbursable meal may also purchase extra foods from the menu. Students bringing a lunch from home may purchase milk, juice, water, or ice cream.

### CHARGING MEALS

Charging meals is discouraged, but may be necessary in certain cases. Elementary students will be allowed to charge a total of three breakfasts and three lunches. Middle and high school students will be allowed to charge a total of one breakfast and one lunch. If your child reaches his/her charge limit and does not have money in his/her account, and does not have cash with which to purchase their meal, an alternative meal will be provided. **There is no provision for adults to charge.** No charges will be accepted for a la carte items. **Students will not be able to charge any meal after May 1<sup>st</sup> through the duration of the school year.** It is necessary that all outstanding charges be paid to the Cafeteria Manager prior to the last day of school. Please respond promptly to messages that you receive, both written and phone calls, regarding charges on your student's account.

## MENUS

Monthly menus can be found on the MCSD website. Menus may change on a very short notice due to market conditions, deliveries, or special school activities.

## SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

MCSD School Nutrition will make modifications and substitutions to the regular school meals for a student with a disability that restricts their diet **with a disability that restricts their diet**. The Special Dietary Needs Prescription Form **must be** completed and signed by a licensed physician or an active 504 plan for a student with a disability before the school cafeteria can provide any modifications or substitutions. The completed form must be provided to the school Cafeteria Manager, the clinic worker, and the special needs dietitian. A form and instructions can be found on the School Nutrition page of the MCSD web site, or at the school clinic or cafeteria. Nutrition analysis chart for menu items is available on the website.

Please be aware that there are factors that may affect a product's actual nutritional value and/or ingredient composition at any given time: Manufacturers' formulations may change without notice. USDA donated products may become available at any time during the year and may replace a purchased item. Product brands may change during the year as new bids are approved. Schools may be using inventory from a previous bid or manufacturer. Our recipes may change during the school year. A la carte snack items vary from school to school so check with the Nutrition Manager at your student's school for specific information.

## SEAMLESS SUMMER LUNCH

SNP provides breakfast and lunch at various schools throughout the district during the summer. Please check the web site or call 706-748-2386 for locations. All children up to 18 years of age receive a free meal. Adults may purchase a lunch.

### Regulation

Descriptor Code: EE-R(0)

### **Food Service Management - Unpaid Meal Charges and Alternate Meals**

This regulation implements the District goals and objectives for unpaid meal charges and alternate meals as outlined.

#### 1. USDA REQUIREMENTS

The USDA has set certain standards and guidelines to be followed in the development and implementation of a policy or procedure on unpaid meal charges and alternate meals.

- A. A policy or procedure must be in place by July 1, 2017 for any district with schools not participating in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) district-wide.

- B. Each State Food Authority (SFA) and Local Food Authority (LFA) has the discretion to set their own policy or procedure but should consider the following:
- Maintain the financial integrity of the Programs
  - Provide children with adequate nutrition to focus in school
  - Minimize stigmatization of children with meal charges – no negative impact
  - Different payment options
  - Identify the stakeholders involved
  - Delinquent debt against the School Nutrition Program
  - Establish standard operating procedures for schools
  - Policy information must be shared annually at the start of each year with schools, parents, and School Nutrition personnel in direct contact with the students. Information should also be shared with students transferring into the district throughout the year. Examples: Student Handbooks, General Administrators' meetings, School Nutrition trainings, MCSD website, and/or again to parents after all avenues of payment has been exhausted.
  - SFAs must maintain documentation of policy communication methods.
  - SFAs must provide policies to the State agency during the Administrative Review

## **2. UNPAID MEAL CHARGES**

- A. Elementary students may charge up to three (3) breakfasts and three (3) lunches before an alternate meal is given. Middle and high school students may charge up to one (1) breakfast and one (1) lunch. There are no provisions for adult meal charges.
- B. No a la carte items may be charged.
- C. Students may not charge meals after May 1<sup>st</sup> for the duration of the school year. All outstanding charges must be paid by the end of the school year.
- D. Unpaid meal charges are rolled over into the next school year as delinquent debt and remain on the student's account until paid.
- E. Any meal charges are considered a debt against a federal program and must be repaid.
- F. Bad debt costs are unallowable. SNP account funds may not be used to cover costs related to bad debt and may not be absorbed.

## **3. PAYMENT OPTIONS**

- A. Cash daily
- B. Pre-pay for meals with cash or through the School Nutrition on-line payment system.
- C. Meal re-payment plans can be set up for outstanding charges

## **4. FREE AND REDUCED MEAL APPLICATIONS**

- A. Families may apply for free and reduced-price meals at any time during the school year, especially if their financial status changes.



- B. Any student transferring from a CEP school, free, to a non-CEP school, paying, will have a 10-day grace period in meal status to give them time to submit a Free and Reduced Meal Application.
- C. Students will begin the new school year with the same status as the previous year. A 30-day grace period is given to give time to submit a new Free and Reduced Meal Application. If no new application is received, the student's status becomes paid after the grace period has ended.
- D. Parents are responsible for meal payments until a Free and Reduced Meal Application has been submitted and approved.

#### **5. SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR UNPAID MEAL CHARGES**

- A. Negative balance letters will be sent home weekly beginning as soon as the student's account becomes delinquent. For those accounts that have reached or exceeded the limit, letters will be sent home multiple times during the week. Telephone calls will also be made to the parents.
- B. Principals will be informed of the outstanding charges and made aware of the steps taken to collect the debt owed. Ask for assistance in contacting parents before having to serve an alternate meal.
- C. Send the Outstanding Balance Report weekly to the SNP office. A Connect-Ed call will be made to parents advising them of the outstanding balances.

#### **6. PROCEDURES FOR ALTERNATE MEALS**

- A. When funds allow, a School Lunch Fund account at all non-CEP schools will be activated to help students who may not have money for meal purchases. Students will be allowed to use this fund for two (2) days before an alternate meal is given.
- B. After all avenues have been exhausted and you are forced to serve the alternate meal, speak to the student's teacher before lunch and let them know the student needs to see the Manager when they come to the cafeteria. A good practice would be to leave the list in the teacher's mailbox at the end of the day so he/she would have it first thing the following morning.
- C. If payment is not received in time for meal service, an alternate meal will be provided. One suggestion is to place it in a bag with a smiley face or something cute on it. REMEMBER, it is not the student's fault. Be sensitive to them and avoid embarrassment. There should be no negative impact on the students.
- D. If a student that has met/exceeded the charge limit comes through the line and already has a tray, ask the child to come to the Manager's office after he finishes his meal. From there, have the child call the parent and let you speak to them. Advise the parent of the meal charges, that you served the student that day, and if no money is received the following day, the student will be given an alternate meal. Recheck to make sure the student's name is on the list provided to the teacher. Never take a tray from a student and throw the food away.
- E. If a child has money to purchase a reduced or paid priced meal at the time of meal service, the child must be provided a meal. This money may not be used to repay

previously unpaid charges if the child intends to use the money to purchase that day's meal.

**7. ALTERNATE MEALS INCLUDE**

- A. Breakfast – cereal, fruit and milk
- B. Lunch – peanut butter sandwich or a cheese sandwich, fruit, vegetable, milk

**8. ACCOUNT COLLECTIONS**

If parents are not being responsible in providing meals or payments for students, the school counselor may contact school social workers or the Department of Family and Children's Services (DFACS) for assistance as needed. Students who repeatedly abuse the payment policy may not be allowed to charge in the future.

If the school continues to be unable to collect outstanding charges from student's parent/guardian, the student may not be allowed to participate in senior activities including commencement or extra curricula activities.

**9. CHANGES IN STATUS**


At any time during the school year, if a family income decreases, an application for free or reduced price meals may be completed to determine eligibility.




# POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT (PBIS)

A major goal at St. Mary's is to create a school environment where students develop pro-social skills. A positive atmosphere for learning is created by trust respect, good manners, fairness, and cooperation. PBIS is a proactive systems approach to preventing and responding to classroom and school disruptions. The entire St. Marys' faculty and staff actively teach the students the school-wide rules based on the 3B's. Faculty and staff monitor, acknowledge, and reward appropriate behaviors. All students are encouraged to make positive and appropriate choices at school.

## SCHOOL-WIDE BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

The following chart outlines the behavior expectations in each area of our school. These and other expectations are explicitly taught, reinforced, and retaught throughout the school year.



	Be Safe	Be Respectful	Be Responsible
<b>Arrival/Dismissal</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk to the right on the RED LINE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep hands and feet to yourself</li> <li>Voice Level 0</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report to your assigned location</li> </ul>
<b>Bus</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use Voice Level 1 while moving, and Level 0 at a Railroad Crossing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow the directions of the bus driver</li> <li>Keep hands and feet to yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sit in your assigned seat at all times</li> <li>Remain seated at all times</li> </ul>
<b>Cafeteria</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enter on Voice Level 0</li> <li>Stay in line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep hands and feet to yourself</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean up your area before leaving</li> <li>Remain seated</li> </ul>





# school Expectations

Be  
Safe

Be Respectful

Be Responsible

<p>Hallway</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk to the right on the RED LINE</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep hands and feet to yourself</li> <li>Voice Level 0</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report directly to your location (i.e. classroom)</li> </ul>
<p>Restroom</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wash your hands with soap</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect others privacy</li> <li>Voice Level 0</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use equipment and supplies properly</li> </ul>

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT SYSTEM

On a daily basis, a student can earn “Honey Money Points” if they are caught being Safe, Respectful, and/or Responsible by a faculty/staff member (see matrices for examples). There will be many instances when a student will receive verbal praise, a smile, or nod instead of a Honey Money Point. Points are intended to serve as a reminder to catch kids implementing appropriate behavior in pursuit of a 5:1 negative ratio. We do not want to exclude those students who are always engaging in appropriate behavior or those students who are more at-risk for challenging behavior from receiving points. All students deserve and need to be recognized for positive behavior, and all students engage in positive behaviors sometime.

All staff members, volunteers, and substitute teachers have the opportunity to hand out Honey Money whether they teach that particular student or not, and tickets can be handed out across all school settings. This is a school-wide effort to increase recognition of positive student behavior. Recognition of positive behavior is an important step in teaching students the behaviors we want to see at St. Mary’s. Honey Money points are designed to be user friendly. It will be important to teach and remind students that they will NOT receive a Honey Money Point if they ask for it.

## How does the process work?

1. A staff member observes a student displaying one of the behaviors outlined on the expectations matrices.
2. The staff member will reward the student while complimenting the student with a verbal explanation that identifies the **specific behavior** that is being recognized and linking the behavior to a **school pillar**. For example, “Wow, thank you for stopping to **help pick up Suzy’s books**, that was very **responsible** of you; you’ve earned a Honey Money point.”
3. Teachers have the option of doing a classroom reward for number of awards earned by his or her students.
4. Each classroom collects Honey Money points to redeem classroom celebrations and/or recognitions from the administration. Celebrations and/or recognitions will be determined by the administration and are subject to change based on student and parent surveys.

We will also have school-wide celebrations, contests, and acknowledgements throughout the school a that focus on increasing a positive behavior within the entire school body. For example, when a class earns 10 Honey Money Points, that class can redeem for possibly a popsicle party.

# DISCIPLINE PLAN

St. Mary's Magnet Academy's discipline program is a progressive plan for discipline that includes, but is not limited to, office time out, time out at home, mandatory parent visit, administrative morning/afternoon detention, Saturday Camp, out of school suspension and referral to the student discipline tribunal. All discipline interventions will consider the age of the child, as well as, the particular circumstances of the situation. Parents will be informed of their child's behavior.

**The following policies apply while students are at school, while students are on any school district property, while students are at bus stops, on the way to or from school, on buses or other MCSD- provided transportation, and at all school-related functions and events such as sports or extracurricular activities.**

*The School Board and the school reserve the right to punish behavior that is disruptive to good order and discipline in the school even if such behavior is not specified in the following written rules.*

## Level I Discipline

Level I discipline is used for minor acts of misconduct which interfere with orderly school procedures, school functions, extracurricular programs, approved transportation, or a student's own learning process. Students may be disciplined by the faculty and staff involved or may be referred directly to the principal or designee.

Faculty and staff members may utilize any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Contact the Parent/Guardian
3. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian and teacher
4. Teacher assigned after-school detention
5. Counselor referral
6. Social Worker referral
7. Loss of recess or other free choice time
8. Isolation during lunch
9. Share a chair (alternative classroom)
10. Participation in a school-service project (Stinger Academy, Saturday Camp, etc.) which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)
11. Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s)

The principal or designee may utilize any of the above discipline management techniques, and/or may employ:

1. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian, teacher, principal and/or designee
2. Restriction from school programs and special assemblies
3. Teacher assigned after-school detention
4. Assign to administrative detention: Morning Detention is from 6:00 a.m. to 7:15 a.m.; After School Detention is from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
5. Saturday Camp (8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.)
6. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
7. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s)

**NOTE:** Four Level I behaviors that interrupts the learning environment of the student and others equals a major offense.

## Level II Discipline

Level II discipline offenses are intermediate acts of misconduct that require administrative intervention. These acts include, but are not limited to, repeated, unrelated acts of minor misconduct and misbehaviors directed against persons or property, but which do not seriously endanger the health, safety or well-being of others. Consideration of necessary behavior support services should be given, if not already provided.

Students guilty of a Level II offense may receive any of the discipline management techniques appropriate for the situation as determined by the principal or designee, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Student participation in conference with parent/guardian, teacher, academic dean, principal and/or designee
2. Assignment to lunchtime detention
3. Restriction from programs and special assemblies
4. Assign to administrative detention: Morning Detention is from 6:00 a.m. to 7:15 a.m.; After School Detention is from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
5. Counselor referral
6. Social Worker referral
7. Contact with Department of Family Children Services
8. Suspension from school for up to three school days, which shall include any time during which the student was subject to suspension pending investigation.
9. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
10. Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
11. Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s)
12. Participation in a school service project which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)

13. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s).
14. Referral to MCSD Tribunal

**NOTE:** Some Level II violations may become Level III violations based on the severity of the offense

## Level III Discipline

Level III discipline offenses represent the most serious acts of misconduct. These offenses must be immediately reported to the principal. These violations are so serious that they may require use of outside agencies and/or law enforcement. Such acts may also result in criminal penalties being imposed. Any misconduct that threatens the health, safety, or well-being of others may result in immediate suspension of the student from the school and/or school-sponsored activities for up to three school days, pending disciplinary investigation of the allegations. Student and parent/guardian participation in a conference with the principal is an element of all discipline actions in this category, even if such a conference has previously occurred. Initiation of necessary behavior support services should be given if not already provided.

1. Restriction from programs and special assemblies
2. Suspension from school for up to ten school days, which shall include any time during which the student was subject to suspension pending investigation
3. Participation in the cleaning/repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
4. Financial restitution for the repair of any damage caused to the school-related environment
5. Development of a written or graphic representation that reflects understanding of the specific misbehavior, the nature of the expected behavior, and the related character trait(s)
6. Participation in a school-service project which enables the student to be engaged in the desired character trait(s)
7. Any other disciplinary technique that positively promotes the student code of conduct and desired character trait(s)
8. Contact with Department of Family Children Services
9. Referral to MCSD tribunal
10. Assignment to the Marshall Success Center
11. Refer criminal acts to the Columbus Police Department
12. Expulsion

**NOTE: Students will be referred to the counselor and/or social worker by administration if necessary.**

**In cases of disciplinary violations not covered by this handbook, the Principal may impose corrective measures which he or she believes to be in the best interest of the student(s) involved and the school to ensure safety for all.**



## **SEARCHES OF STUDENTS OR PROPERTY AND QUESTIONING OF STUDENTS**

School district personnel has the authority to appropriately question students regarding discipline or other topics. School district personnel also have the authority to conduct, to investigate, and address student misconduct, including the use of hand-held metal detector wands.

## **STUDENTS EXPRESSING THEMSELVES**

A large majority of complications begin verbally before escalating. For this reason, we are asking parents/guardians to speak with your child/children on the seriousness of verbal aggression. When students express themselves at school, at school sponsored activities, or in public places away from school, they must abide by the following rules:

1. The expression shall not contain verbal assault, including threats of violence, or sexual harassment as defined pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; of students, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel;
2. The expression of the student shall not contain written words, spoken word phrases, or gestures that ridicule or belittle.
3. The expression of the student shall not encourage other persons to violate school rules.

## **CLASS DISRUPTIONS**

Students may not engage in any act that substantially disrupts the orderly conduct of a school function, substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, or poses a threat to the health, safety, and/or welfare of students, staff or others (includes disruptive behaviors on school buses).

## **PHYSICAL ASSAULT**

Student may not engage in activities that cause physical harm of students, teachers, administrators or other school personnel.

## **FIGHTING**

Students may not engage in verbal altercations or physical fights in school buildings, on school grounds, when traveling in school vehicles/buses or at school sponsored events. Students hitting, striking, kicking or in any other way harming another student, teachers, administrators or school personnel, will be suspended and may be recommended for expulsion.

## **SCHOOL PROPERTY**

Students are not to damage or to write, draw, or mark on school property in any way. Doing so, will result in a vandalism consequence.

## **THEFT/STEALING**

Students are prohibited from borrowing without permission or stealing personal or public (school) property.

**INAPPROPRIATE BODILY CONTACT**

Students are not to engage in any activities that involve touching, feeling, groping or any other inappropriate contact.

**VANDALISM**

Students are not to engage in willful and/or malicious destruction, damage, or defacement of public or private property without consent.

**DRUGS/ALCOHOL**

Possession, use, distribution, or sale of drugs or alcohol on school grounds, school-sponsored events, and on MCSD bus is prohibited.

**WEAPONS**

The possession, use, or intentions to use any instrument or object that is used or intended to be used in manner that may inflict bodily harm are prohibited. This includes toy objects that resemble or have the appearance of a weapon.

**If a student leaves assigned areas he/she will be given a consequence. Depending on the frequency or severity of the situation (leaving the campus) the student could be assigned to tribunal by administrators.**

**BUS RIDERS**

Parents are responsible for ensuring students arrive safely to and from the bus stop.

**PARENTS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO BOARD THE BUS FOR ANY REASON**

**PURSUANT TO LAW.** Due to the MCSD bus schedule, the bus will not wait on passengers. For this reason, bus riders are to arrive to assigned bus stop on time. If problems arise, please contact St. Mary’s Magnet Academy. Parents may also make an appointment with the Transportation Department at (706) 748-2876.

<i>At the Bus Stop</i>	<i>When the Bus Arrives</i>
<p>Remember that school rules apply at the bus stop. For example, fighting or physical play, use or possession of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol are prohibited.</p> <p>Use profane or vulgar language while waiting for the bus is prohibited.</p> <p>Stand off the roadway while awaiting the bus.</p>	<p>Students shall be prohibited from using any electronic devices while entering the school bus.</p>

## **BUS CONDUCT**

It is expected that EVERY student that boards a MCS D bus treat themselves and others with respect. Remember that school rules apply to the school bus. For example, fighting or physical play, use or possession of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol are not prohibited.

- REMAIN SEATED WHILE BUS IS IN MOTION.
- Make an effort to sit three to a seat.
- Keep arms, head and objects inside windows.
- Use of profane or vulgar language while on the bus is prohibited. ABSOLUTE SILENCE is required at railroad crossings.
- No eating or drinking allowed.
- Students may transport band instrument(s) on the bus, if space is available.
- Using mirrors, lasers, cameras, or any other lights or reflective devices or electronic devices that might interfere with the school bus driver's operation of the school bus is prohibited.
- Students are prohibited from using cell phones without head phones.
- ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES, INCLUDING CELL PHONES, MUST BE TURNED OFF AT RAILROAD CROSSINGS AND ALL HEADPHONES MUST BE REMOVED.

<b>CONSEQUENCES FOR BUS VIOLATIONS INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:</b>				
<i>1st Offense:</i>	<i>2nd Offense:</i>	<i>3rd Offense:</i>	<i>4th Offense:</i>	<i>5th Offense:</i>
Parent/Guardian will be contacted	Parent Conference	Parent Conference	Parent Conference	Parent Conference
Student Conference	Student Bus Behavior Contract is conducted through a scheduled meeting with parent and personnel	Modify Student Bus Behavior Contract conducted through a scheduled meeting with the parent and personnel	Modify Student Bus Behavior Contract conducted through a scheduled meeting with the parent and personnel	Modify Student Bus Behavior Contract conducted through a scheduled meeting with the parent and personnel
Seat Change on the Bus	Bus Suspension (0 to 3 days)  *Based on the discretion of the Principal	Bus Suspension (0 to 5 days)  *Based on the discretion of the Principal	Bus Suspension (0 to 10 days)  *Based on the discretion of the Principal	Bus Suspension (Remainder of the Semester)  *Based on the discretion of the Principal

*\* Punishment for violation of any of the above rules may result in your student being removed from the bus utilizing the following progressive plan. Any student found guilty of student endangerment may result in automatic removal from the bus. Riding the bus is a privilege not a right. Do not abuse your privilege. Any offense over the 5<sup>th</sup> will result in permanent removal from riding the bus either for the semester or remainder of the school year. Students who participate in dangerous behavior while on a Muscogee County School Bus will be referred to tribunal.*

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

For the 2022-2023 school year, students at St. Mary's Magnet Academy are not permitted to bring cell phones to school and will be given consequences outlined in the Level 1 thru Level 3 discipline descriptions. No student shall use an electronic device, including a cell phone, with camera, video, or voice recording function to take or transmit audio and/or pictures, video of an individual without his/her consent is prohibited.

MCSD personnel are authorized to confiscate communication devices. School administrators may exercise discretion to deny student use of electronic devices and impose reasonable consequences for such.

If students violate the electronic device policy that is established at the school, the following consequences will be enforced:

Please be aware that if you choose to send valuable items to school with your child (ren), such as cell phones, tablets, personal belongings, or similar that choice involves some risk that those items will be confiscated, lost, damaged, or stolen while at school. MCSD personnel cannot search for items that students have lost after they elect to bring them to school and personnel will not be responsible for the value of a phone or other device in the event of unintentional damage, loss, or theft of the phone or device. Parents should consider this carefully when sending any electronic items to school with their child (ren).

**First Offense:** Cell phone will be turned in to the principal or designee.

- Assistant Principal or designee will contact the parent to pick up the cell phone.
- Parent or guardian may pick up the cell phone at the close of the school day (3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.) or give an adult of their choice written permission to pick up the cell phone. The adult must present a valid ID upon picking it.

**Second Offense:** Student will be assigned administrative detention.

- Parent may pick up phone after three school days at the end of the third day (**see first offense**).

**Third Offense:** Student will be assigned time-out time in the office.

- Parent may pick up phone after five school days
- Mandatory parent conference is held.

**Fourth Offense:** Student will be suspended for one day for each offense due to defiance.

- Parent may pick up phone at the end of the school day (See First Offense).

If the parent is adamant that he or she cannot allow the phone to be held for the number of days listed in the proposed protocol, then the parent/guardian can choose for his or her daughter or son to accept a one-day out of school suspension in lieu of the phone being held.

## **BULLYING/HARASSMENT**

The Muscogee County School Board believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited. Such prohibition shall be included in the Handbook and Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system.

Students who experience bullying are encouraged to report and share information with any school district personnel. Students, who want to make a report of bullying behavior in writing, may obtain and fill out a “Silent Report” form. These forms are available in the offices of school counselors and school administrative offices.

***\*Each reported incident of bullying behavior will be documented and investigated by the principal and/or designee.***

Additional reporting resources:

MCSDB Student Safety/Bully Hotline: 706-748-2267

Statewide Bullying Hotline: 1-877-729-7867 / 1-877-SAY-STOP

Bullying behavior is defined as:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so; or
2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or
3. Any intentional written, verbal, or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:
  - Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of Code Section 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in Code Section 16-5-23.1. Visible bodily harm is defined by 16-5-23.1 as bodily harm capable of being perceived by a person other than the victim;
  - Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education;

- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system. The term ‘bullying’ as used in this Policy also applies to cyber bullying, which is behavior that occurs through the use of electronic communication, whether or not such electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, where such electronic communication:

1. Is directed specifically at students or school personnel;
2. Is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and
3. Creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students’ or school personnel’s person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

For the purposes of this Rule, electronic communication includes but is not limited to any transfer of signs, signals, writings, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has either committed a bullying offense or has been a victim of bullying, the student’s parent or guardian will be notified.

Each reported incident of bullying behavior will be documented and investigated by the school principal / designee, and a disposition determined which may include suspension from school or a referral to the Student Discipline Tribunal. School district personnel will conduct follow-ups on reports as appropriate.

Any person who reports in good faith an incident of bullying, harassment, or intimidation to an appropriate school official, and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures in the school district’s policy shall be immune from civil liability for any damages caused by such reporting or any failure to remedy the reported incident.

Note that some student misconduct prohibited by this policy may also trigger responsibilities under the District’s policies preventing discrimination on the basis of Sex, Race, Color, National Origin, Religion, Disability, Gender and/or Age. Individuals receiving complaints of bullying or harassment should consider both sets of District policies that prohibit both ‘bullying’ and peer harassment based on Sex, Race, Color, National Origin, Religion, Disability, Gender and/or Age.

If a student in grades third through twelfth is found guilty of bullying behavior by the discipline tribunal for the third time in a school year, that student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Any report of retaliation against a reporter of bullying will be investigated and addressed accordingly.

All schools are trained in the four-step investigation process for an alleged bullying complaint. The written process is located in the document section of this website and can be downloaded. Additionally, there are resource documents that can be viewed or downloaded for your support.

## **Bullying Consequences**

- **First Incident:** Student will be suspended for up to 3 days. Parent must attend a conference upon the student's return and sign a contract.
- **Second Incident:** Student will be suspended for up to 5 days. Parent must attend a conference upon student's return to revise the initial contract.
- **Third Incident:** Student will be referred to a tribunal hearing and suspended for up to 10 days.

## **PROVIDING POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORTS**

### **STUDENT SERVICES**

#### **COUNSELING**

The guidance counselor is available upon request to discuss issues important to student adjustment and achievement. Classroom and small group activities are offered concerning friendships, changing families, study skills, safety, and self-concept. Students practice like skills such as processing feelings, making decisions, and listening and communicating effectively.

#### **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)**

MTSS is a framework that ensures successful education outcomes for all students by using a data-based problem solving process. The intent of MTSS is to provide and evaluate the effectiveness of multiple tiers of integrated and social-emotional instruction and intervention supports matched to student needs that align with educational standards. A multi-tiered service delivery model incorporates standards and skills-based instruction, assessments to inform instruction, efficient use of school resources, evidence-based programs and practice, focus on integration and alignment with core instruction, and frequency and intensity of instruction/intervention model matched to student needs. Evaluating student response to instruction/intervention (RTI) guides SSTs with appropriate educational planning.

The Student Support Team (SST) is a Tier 3 support. The Student Support Team (SST) is a school-based, solution-focused team of general and special education professionals designed to support the academic, behavior, and social-emotional needs of ALL students through the provision of alternative instructional strategies. Each building level team may be comprised of an administrator, classroom teacher, requesting teacher, special education teacher, counselor, school psychologist, special education resource person, school social worker, parent or central office personnel. One member of the SST serves as chair and point-of-

contact to schedule a student for the SST process. This process includes identifying needs, planning and implementing appropriate instruction, monitoring progress, and conducting assessments, if needed. The parent, student, teachers, administrators, and other educational agencies are involved in creating a personalized learning plan (PLP) during the SST meeting.

At St. Mary's, the behavioral and academic needs are documented by teachers in order to make educational decisions that benefit the WHOLE CHILD. Students' progress towards behavior and academic goals are monitored by building administrators. Parents are our students' first teachers. For this reason, the school will work hand-in-hand with the parent to ensure the student has significant growth.

## **Section 504**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, commonly referred to as "Section 504," is a nondiscrimination statute enacted by the United States Congress. The purpose of Section 504 is to prohibit discrimination and to assure that disabled students have access to educational opportunities and benefits.

Section 504 plans are available to students with a physical or mental impairment which impacts a major life activity (learning, self-help skills, walking, breathing, talking, etc.). A 504 Plan outlines reasonable accommodations, regular or special education, related aids and services to ensure the student's civil rights are being met.

For more information regarding Section 504, or if you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact your teacher or Principal, or the 504 Chair at your school.

## **Students Eligible for Special Education Supports and Services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act / Students with IEPs**

Parents and children have many rights under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This law provides that eligible students should receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The term "appropriate" is based on the educational needs of the individual child. The Individuals with Disabilities Act provides that each public school child who receives special education and related services must have an IEP. The IEP outlines the needs and strengths of the individual student, and guides the delivery of special education supports and services for that student.

## **Parent Rights**

It is the responsibility of the District to provide parents with notice of their rights under the IDEA. The MCSD's Parent Rights form is available at the MCSD website at:

<https://www.muscogee.k12.ga.us/p/Divisions/StudentServices/StudentsWithDisabilities/Information>



## **Discipline for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities will be disciplined in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations. At times, discipline procedures for students with disabilities will be the same as the procedures implemented for students without disabilities, and, at times, the procedures implemented for students with disabilities will not be the same. A comprehensive discussion of those procedures and their legal underpinnings is outside the scope of this handbook. However, if you have questions about the disciplinary process related to a student with disabilities, and those questions cannot be answered at the school level, please contact the Regional Chief for the school provided in the District Phone Numbers chart.( please refer to MCSD Code of Conduct district contacts section)

The information provided below is general, and is included here only to give parents and students general information.

## **Manifestation Determination Meetings**

Within ten (10) school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the MCSD will notice and hold a Manifestation Determination Meeting (MDM). An MDM will include relevant members of the child's IEP Team. Parents will be given notice of the meeting and are encouraged to attend.

The purpose of this meeting is to consider whether the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability; whether the behavior has a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability; and to determine whether the behavior was a direct result of the District's failure to implement the student's IEP. The meeting participants will consider relevant information from the student's IEP or other records, teacher observations, and information provided by parents.

A decision will be made at the Manifestation Determination Meeting. After that meeting and decision, the parent or the school may appeal by requesting a due process hearing. If a due process hearing request is filed, the parent or the school may request an expedited hearing, which must occur within twenty (20) school days of the date the complaint requesting the hearing is filed.

## **Functional Behavioral Assessments and Behavior Improvement Plans: FBAs and BIPs**

FBAs and BIPs will likely also be part of the process where a student with a disability has violated the Code of Conduct and a change of placement is contemplated.

An FBA focuses on identifying the behaviors that are problematic, and the function or purpose behind a behavior. Typically, the process involves looking closely at a wide range of child-specific factors (e.g., social, affective, environmental). Knowing why a child misbehaves is directly helpful to the IEP Team in developing a BIP that will reduce or eliminate the misbehavior.

A BIP is a Plan that guides school district personnel in the handling of behaviors.

FBAs and BIPs are required when the LEA, the parent, and the relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that a student's conduct was a manifestation of his or her disability.

If a child's misconduct has been found to have a direct and substantial relationship to his or her disability, the IEP Team will need to conduct an FBA of the child, unless one has already been conducted. Similarly, the IEP Team must write a BIP for this child, unless one already exists. If a BIP already exists, then the IEP Team will need to review the plan and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior.

## HEALTH SERVICES

A certified nurse is on call to provide emergency assistance. The school clinic worker provides basic health services to students including but limited to the following.

- Assist with routine health screenings as requested.
- Make referrals to school nurse, school social worker, guidance counselor, administrator, school staff, and community agencies as appropriate.
- Provide basic first aid.
- Administer medications and perform selected health procedures per established guidelines.

### MEDICATION

- **Muscogee County School Medication Administration/Medical Authorization and Release Forms must be completed before we can administer any medication. Verbal permission is not acceptable.**
- All prescription medication must be brought to school by a parent/guardian in the original pharmaceutical container with a clear label. **Medicine cannot be brought to the school by a student.**
- Non-prescription medications also require written authorization from parents and must be in the original container with a clear label.
- All medication is kept in a locked cabinet and should have the following information on the container:
  1. Child's name

2. Name of medication
  3. Strength of medication
  4. Dosage for this child
  5. Physician's name
  6. Date prescribed (must be a current prescription)
- No medication will be administered by anyone other than authorized personnel.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Any student who has a communicable disease that poses a substantial threat to the health or safety of the school community may be removed from the school by the principal on the approval of the superintendent until such student no longer poses such a threat. The Muscogee County School District works with the local health department and the student's health care provider and follows their guidance and recommendation regarding exclusion and re-entry for communicable diseases that are considered a threat to the safety of the school and community.

### **Communicable Illness**

If a student has a fever of over 100.4 degrees, that student should not come to school or to a school function unless/until he or she has been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications. Students with a fever of over 100.4 or other symptoms of a contagious disease may be asked to go home.

### **Pediculosis (Head Lice)**

As of April 2001, Muscogee County School District adopted a NO NIT head lice policy. When head lice are discovered, the principal or his/her designee will immediately notify the parent/guardian and make arrangements for the student to be picked up and treatment initiated. The parent will be given written and verbal instructions on how to treat the condition. Upon return, the parent/guardian must accompany the student to school and remain with the student for readmission into school. The principal or designee will inspect the student's head for the presence of nits or active lice. The child will not be readmitted if either one is present. If the lice infestation occurs again, or becomes problematic, the principal may request treatment documentation from the student's health care provider or the local health department. This condition requires immediate treatment and should not require more than 2 absences from school.

### **Tinea Corporis (Ring Worm) and Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)**

When it is discovered that a student exhibits symptoms consistent with ringworm or conjunctivitis (pink eye), the principal or his/her designee, should immediately notify the parent/guardian and request the child be picked up and treatment initiated. Both conditions must be verified by the doctor and treated before the child may return to school. The child will be given an exclusion form and the physician must sign it upon examination. This form needs to be returned to the school upon returning to school.

## MISCELLANEOUS “HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS”

Toys, games, animals, or other items that can cause disruption are never allowed at school unless the teacher has given specific permission to bring them.

- Toys and other items should not dangle from book bags.
- Book bags on wheels are **NEVER** allowed in the school.
- Heely or any shoes with wheels are **NEVER** allowed inside the school.
- Hand held pencil sharpeners are **NOT** allowed in the school.
- Items brought to school without permission may be taken from the student to be returned to the parent/guardian. It is the student’s responsibility to notify their parents that an item has been taken up by the teacher or other school personnel.
- The lost and found box is located in the cafeteria. Please tell your child to look for any lost items there. **Items such as coats, sweaters, jackets, hats, notebooks, backpacks and lunch boxes should have the child’s name in or on them for identification.**
- Students should never bring more money than they need for the day.
- Our school and school grounds are drug and alcohol free environments.