

ST. MARGARET SCHOOL



PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK

2018-2019

736 S. Farmer Street, Otsego, MI 49078

Phone: 269-694-2951 Fax: 269-694-4520

www.stmargaretschool.net

Dear Parents and Students,

Welcome to St. Margaret School. In choosing to have your child/children attend our school, you have demonstrated a commitment to the values and philosophy of a Catholic education. The Parent-Student Handbook reflects the policies of St. Margaret School for this school year. Please read this document carefully, sign the attached agreement, and return to the school office. This agreement states that you intend to abide by the policies of St. Margaret School during this school year.

The faculty and staff of St. Margaret School look forward to working with you to promote academic excellence and spiritual development in the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church. Together, let us pray that God, who has begun this good work in us, may carry it through to completion.

If you should ever have any questions, or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. I welcome you to St. Margaret School!

God bless you.

Sincerely,

Erin Warnez, Principal

ewarnez@stmargaretschool.net

269-694-2951

St. Margaret School History

St. Margaret School was founded in 1960 by Father Vincent McKenna, who as pastor, saw the need for a school to provide an authentic Catholic education for his parish children. Today our school is located on a beautiful campus that includes our church, Knights of Columbus Hall, and elementary and pre-school. St. Margaret School offers preschool through eighth grade under the Diocese of Kalamazoo's Office of Schools.

The curriculum stresses development of *Catholic Identity* and academic achievement within a Christian community where the child feels that he is loved and respected. Our theology curriculum is in compliance with the bishops of the world. United with one another in meaningful liturgy and prayer, the students further come to an understanding of the Christian life. At St. Margaret School, we "teach as Jesus did." The content and skills taught for every lesson at every grade is aligned with the Catholic teachings of the Church, is necessary for student success in the next grade, and necessary for success in life. This process allows us to use rigorous guidelines and objectives for programs of learning and for the teaching of all secular subject areas.

Instruction is marked by fresh approaches to pedagogy and based on the best research for teaching and learning. Teachers plan for what students need to know and how they will help students learn. Students get immediate remediation or extension based on their learning needs. There is an emphasis on principles rather than fact, on learning through problem-solving rather than by precept. We strive to offer a program that is focused on literacy, makes use of a wide variety of audio-visual and technological tools, and uses a multi-resource approach to the content areas. Our teacher-student ratio allows for small class sizes, where teachers individualize and differentiate instruction, so that each student can achieve and be successful in school and in life.

St. Margaret Parish Mission Statement

We at St. Margaret Parish, accept the call to be a Eucharistic-centered and welcoming family community, striving to know, love, and serve God by sharing our faith with others and becoming disciples of His message. "We love because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19)

St. Margaret School Mission Statement

St. Margaret School will provide a firm educational foundation of religious values and academic knowledge for each student in a Catholic, nurturing environment.

Philosophy

St. Margaret School is an elementary Catholic school comprising of preschool through eighth grade. Our goal is to assist each child to develop spiritually, academically, psychologically, physically, and socially to his/her full potential with affirmation of parents. We provide a solid foundation in the basic areas of knowledge: Theology, Reading and the English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Our model is "Christ is part of our everyday living experience in the classrooms."

- We are a Christ-centered school in which theology is taught on a daily basis as well as woven into the entire curriculum.
- The *Disciples of Christ, Education in Virtue Program* is a foundational part of every class and daily life at school, both in and outside of the classroom.
- Children participate in Catholic activities including, but not limited to, attending Mass twice during each week, rosary devotion, adoration, and the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Program through fourth grade.

- Parents are the first and foremost educators of their children; cooperation between home and school is essential.
- The educational staff takes a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of each child.
- Children have the right to learn in a safe, structured, and orderly environment.
- The complete development of the child goes beyond the academics and social needs of children, incorporating spiritual development as a primary focus of education.

Our children are taught to be accepting and respectful of individual differences. Service to the school, and the local and global community is part of the educational process and fulfills our spiritual calling. Throughout the year, each grade level/class participates in activities concerning addressing issues of Catholic social teaching. Providing service to others is a focus of living as Jesus' presence in the world.

St. Margaret School endorses the call of the Catholic Bishops of the United States to express its educational ministry through the objectives of personal spirituality, social justice, and a strong academic program. It is the consensus of the faculty that every human being has a right to pursue knowledge corresponding with his/her dignity and God-given ability, regardless of background or gender. In the early years, education is often of the utmost importance because through education and guidance the children of today become the Catholic citizens of tomorrow.

Theology

The freedom to teach and practice our religion is the reason for the existence of St. Margaret School. We are a Catholic school, and all students, including non-Catholics, receive instruction in the Catholic faith. Catholic students have many opportunities to receive the sacraments. All students take part in liturgical and Eucharistic services.

Accreditation

St. Margaret School is accredited by the Michigan Non-Public School Accrediting Association (MNSAA). As a part of our accreditation process, the School Improvement Team meets regularly to discuss concerns and needs identified during site visits by MNSAA. Site visit reports may be viewed in the front office. Annual reports of progress from the school are also available for review and are updated each spring.

NONDISCRIMINATORY AND TITLE IX COORDINATOR POLICY

St. Margaret School admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or athletic and other school-administered programs.

To the extent that Title IX of the U.S. Education Amendments of 1972 applies to St. Margaret School, the principal is appointed as the Title IX coordinator. St. Margaret School abides by Policy #4166.4 and its accompanying regulations found in the Policy Manual of the Catholic Schools – Diocese of Kalamazoo regarding avoidance of harassment. The principal will answer questions and disseminate information, investigate complaints, and take appropriate corrective action pursuant to this policy.

Enrollment Policy

In accordance with the Michigan General School Laws, students enrolling in kindergarten for the school year, must be five years old by September 1st. If the school is unable to meet the needs of a particular student, the principal reserves the right to determine admission. Records are required for all transfer

students. St. Margaret School does not accept any student who has been expelled from another school for a period of 12 months following the expulsion, and then only if determined appropriate by administration.

Any *new families enrolled in kindergarten through eighth grade, receive their first marking period free of charge.* This is to encourage new families to try St. Margaret School free of financial risk and to make the best decision for their children based on having experienced our school firsthand.

Withdrawal Policy

- Families must notify the school *in writing* if a student is withdrawn from the school.
- Registered students who are enrolled on the first day of the school year, that withdraw before the end of the *first quarter*, will be responsible for 50% of their contracted tuition/fees.
- Registered students who are withdrawn prior to the end of the first *semester*, will owe 75% of their contracted tuition/fees.
- Students withdrawn in the second semester, will still be responsible for 100% of tuition/fees.

Financial Policies

The cost of tuition and book fees are reviewed yearly by the Local Consultative Advisory Body (LCAB.) Tuition is pro-rated if families have more than one child in school.

Tuition Payment Options:

Payment Options: *(Please read carefully as our payment options have changed.)*

- Pay in full by June 1st and receive a 3% discount on the total tuition amount.
- Enroll in the **FACTS® Tuition Management Program**. Payment is over a ten-month schedule beginning in September with the last payment in June.
- Please note that you may pay in full for one child and utilize FACTS® for another.

Enrollment/Re-Enrollment

- The \$50.00 Registration Fee for students, must be submitted with the registration application.
- Returning students must reserve their spot by paying the Registration Fee by the date designated in the tuition agreement.
- All Enrollment Fees are NON-REFUNDABLE.

FACTS® Tuition Management Program Overview

- There is an annual non-refundable administrative fee for enrollment in the FACTS® program per family per year. This fee will be added to your tuition collected by FACTS® – *please do not make this payment to the school.*
- Tuition is paid over 10 months via automatic deduction, September through June.
- **Your enrollment form to FACTS® must be returned to the school with your registration.**
- All families not selecting the FACTS® tuition plan will be expected to make one direct payment to St. Margaret School for the entire amount of tuition no later than September 1st. You may drop off your payment to the school office.

Delinquent Accounts

It is of utmost importance to pay your monthly tuition fees and to not allow your account to become delinquent. Delinquent accounts will be sent overdue notices and will be charged a fee by FACTS, the tuition management system. Your agreement and signing of this contract allows us the right to turn over accounts more than 90 days delinquent to a collection agency.

Financial Aid

A limited amount of financial aid is available for tuition assistance. It is important that the application be filled out completely and submitted with the appropriate tax documents by the deadline determined on the form. **FINANCIAL AID FORMS are available in the school.** Families are notified during the summer how much assistance they have been awarded, and the amount is automatically applied toward tuition. Families receiving partial assistance will be held responsible for the balance of their tuition and fees. Applications are accepted in the spring and handled in strict confidence. Tuition can also be reduced with participation in the SCRIP Program (see following information.) Tuition payments are only made through FACTS. Parishioners of other Catholic parishes may receive a subsidy from their parish; please contact your parish church office for information.

Tuition Scale

PRESCHOOL	
3 year old half-day (Tuesday and Thursday)	\$1,092.62
3 year old full day (Tuesday and Thursday)	\$1,966.72
4 year old half-day (M-W-F)	\$1,348.97
4 year old full day (M-W-F)	\$2,534.05
GRADES K-8 number of students in family:	
1	\$3,470.13
2	\$5,667.99
3	\$7,039.02
4	\$8,273.48
5	\$9,061.43
6	\$9,849.38

SCRIP Program—Save on Tuition Cost

Reduce your tuition with Scrip credit: An integral part of our fundraising is the SCRIP Program. You can purchase a variety of gift certificates from local grocery stores, gas stations, waste disposal, dry cleaning, restaurants, sports supply, building supplies, travel, retail shops and more. All families are encouraged to take advantage of this program. **SCRIP order forms are available to purchase cards for varying amounts, or special order in the following ways:** Before and after each mass on the weekends, and in the school office on weekdays. *Parents are notified quarterly regarding their scrip deductions to tuition balances.*

Lunch

Students bring their own lunch to school on each full day of school. Students should not bring glass bottles, soft drinks or excessive amounts of candy. Students are expected to use the same manners required in the classroom during lunch. Courtesy toward other students and cooperation with lunch monitors are in order at all times.

Textbooks and Supplies

Tuition includes the cost of textbooks, consumables, and other student materials. Damaged or lost books must be paid for by the student before a new one can be issued. Each year before the start of school, classroom teachers post a supply list on their classroom web page.

Child Care

Child Care is offered through our Kids Klub for before and after school care. Before school is from 7:00 AM until school starts; after school care is from 3:30-5:00 PM. If you would like to apply for Child Care for your child, please contact the school office for an application. If the elementary school is closed for inclement weather, the Child Care is also closed.

Arrival and Departure

School hours are from 8:25 AM to 3:30 PM on full days, and 8:25 a.m. To 11:40 AM during half days. The first bell rings and school doors open for students at 8:15 AM. Parents are asked to bring their children to school and pick them up during our open hours. Please contact the school if you will be late dropping off or picking up your child from school.

Absence from School

Regular attendance and punctuality are expected of all students enrolled at St. Margaret School. Persistent absenteeism causes a genuine hardship for students. Classroom instruction and student interaction are vital parts of the learning process. When a student is absent from school, a parent should call the office by 9:00 AM each day of the absence. If the office does not receive a call, a parent will be contacted. This policy is for the protection of St. Margaret School students and is aligned with the statutes of the State of Michigan.

Students should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Students who are sent home during the school day with a fever will not be allowed to return to school the next day as this would not allow for the 24 hour protection of the entire school community. A written statement giving reasons for the absence or tardiness, must be brought to the student's teacher upon the student's return. These notes/letters will be retained in the office for one year. Should absence for any reason other than illness seem imperative, parents are requested to consult with the Principal and present a written reason for the absence.

The school calendar provides for student time off from school throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to schedule trips or family outings during these times so as to eliminate the need to interrupt a child's learning process.

Missed assignments are the student's responsibility. Students who are absent due to illness have one day for each day of absence to make up the missed assignments, quizzes or tests. For example, a student who was absent three days would be given three school days to complete the missed work. When a student is absent for three or more days due to illness, a parent may call the school office before 9:30 AM to arrange for homework assignments. Homework assignments may be picked up at the school office between 3:00 PM -

3:30 PM. For short absences, students may make arrangement with classmates regarding assignments to expedite getting started on them.

Students may also receive missed assignments from their teacher when they return to school. **Teachers are not required to give make-up tests or assignments for absences due to vacations. No assignment will be given in anticipation of the vacation.** (See also *Homework due to vacations/planned absences.*)

Arrangements for classroom tests missed because of an absence, are to be made with the individual teachers. These tests must be taken within a week of original test date. **Excessive absences (40 days or the equivalent) including tardies**, can be cause for a student to be retained in the current grade.

Tardiness

If a student leaves and returns on the same day (eg. doctor appointment) he/she will be marked a half-day absent if gone for more than one hour. A student shall be considered tardy if he or she arrives to class after the starting bell for either morning or afternoon classes. Students will receive an award at the end of the year for exemplary attendance. Any student with no tardies or absences, either excused or unexcused, for the entire school year, will be awarded a Perfect Attendance Certificate. Students with no more than 1 ½ absences for the entire year will be awarded an Excellent Attendance Certificate.

CURRICULUM

St. Margaret School offers students opportunities for learning in the subject areas of Theology, Math, Science, English Language Arts (includes grammar, rhetoric, reasoning, literature, writing, speaking, listening, and research) and Social Studies. Certified teachers from our local public school district come to our school to teach classes such as Art, Music, Physical Education, and Technology.

Theology

Students learn Catholic doctrine and traditions, study the Bible, actively engage in social justice activities, prepare for the reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation and participate in adoration in the chapel and saying the rosary. Attending mass together twice each week as a school community is an important part of our Catholic Identity, and spiritual formation. In addition, students attend Mass on Holy Days of Obligation, and have opportunities for Reconciliation throughout the school year.

English Language Arts

Students receive instruction in the teaching of grammar, rhetoric, reasoning, literature and writing. Phonetic and comprehension skills are taught through a rigorous program of challenging literature and a variety of reading materials selected by teachers and in alignment with the Office of Schools and Diocesan guidelines. Listening/Speaking, Vocabulary, and Media Skills, including research, are also taught. Printing and cursive writing are formally taught in grades kindergarten through fifth grade.

Writers Academy

Our Writers Academy provides daily opportunities for students to hone their writing and communication skills in all classes. Students read for understanding and write about what they understand. Critical thinking and clarity of expression is practiced many times throughout the school day. Enrichment opportunities are offered for those students who desire more challenge in this area.

Mathematics

Students receive instruction in the math content areas of number and operations, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data in each grade level with increasing challenge. Students' experiences in mathematics promote understanding, connections to the real world, and deeper thinking skills. In each grade, students' individual needs are met as they develop a deep conceptual understanding through problem-based instruction, visual learning, and small and large group work.

Science

Earth, Life, and Physical Sciences, including the Science Processes of Inquiry, Analysis, Reflection and Communication, are taught through hands-on/minds-on strategies. Our new Science Program, *Bring Science Alive*, is taught in grades K-5.

Social Studies

History, Geography, Civics and Government (including Michigan History) and Economics are included in the Social Studies Curriculum.

Physical Education

The physical education program addresses the knowledge, skills, fitness, and attitudes that are appropriate for each grade level and which are critical for a successful physically active lifestyle in elementary school and beyond.*

Communication Technology

Students learn the knowledge and skills to do word processing, data base, spread sheets, and effective research. Technology is integrated with other curricular areas and the use of computers, Chromebooks and i-pads is embedded in other coursework throughout the school day.

Fine Arts

All students receive instruction in visual arts

Homework

Formal home-study is assigned to help students become self-reliant and self-directed. Assignments are designed to reinforce daily lessons, to supplement and enrich class work, and to prepare for certain lessons through various experiences. Since each student has different capabilities and interests, it would be difficult to denote the specific amount of time to be spent on an assignment. A general rule of thumb for homework after school would be 10-20 minutes multiplied by the grade of your child. If you have a question or concern, please contact your child's teacher. Homework is not an assessment. Homework provides practice in study skills, and reinforces concepts being learned. Because it is practice, it is not considered a part of your child's formal grade, however, it is considered important for advancing in knowledge and skills.

Grades

Grading is the way in which student mastery of the curriculum is reported. It is the policy of this school that, unless a special learning concern has been identified and documented, all students must pass summative assessments *with a minimum average of C*, or its equivalent. Students receiving less than the acceptable grade will be required to redo the summative assessment or complete an alternative assessment designed to demonstrate the same level of student proficiency as the original. Proficient is from 90% to 100%; Partially Proficient is from 80% to 89%; Not Proficient is under 79%. Students in grades K-5 do not receive letter grades; grades are recorded as (+), (/), or (-). Students in grades 6-8 are graded according to the following scale:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	below 60

Report Cards

We use the Diocesan-created standards-based report cards that are sent home four times each year at the end of every marking period. Progress reports are sent home in the middle of each quarter. Questions or concerns about student learning should be addressed to the teacher as early as possible for the benefit of the child.

Promotion/Transition/Detention

At the end of the academic year, students will be either promoted, transferred to the next grade, or retained in their current grade. Promotion indicates the student has demonstrated readiness for the next grade level of study. Transfer indicates the student will be placed in the next grade level, but has minimal or inconsistent mastery of skills in their current level. Retention indicates the student will be retained in their current grade. In general, retention is avoided by intensive intervention strategies, which includes frequent communication with parents, ongoing support from the teacher, and is used only in extreme instances when all other options have failed to make a difference for a child.

Academic Probation

A student whose academic performance indicates serious deficiencies may be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation will be placed on a two-week improvement plan. At the end of the two-week period, the student's academic progress will be assessed. Students whose average is below a C- will not be allowed to participate in any extra-curricular activity, until the grade has improved to a C-.

Conferences

Conferences are scheduled twice during the school year. If a parent wishes to confer with a teacher at any time, please call the teacher to schedule a meeting. A phone call or a note of request for an appointment will be honored as soon as possible.

Instructional Media Center -IMC

The school has a well-equipped library and media center. Students are encouraged to use the IMC for curricular enrichment and pleasure reading. The following are expectations for all students:

1. Borrowed books are to be returned on time and in good condition.
2. A fine of one canned good per day is required for overdue books with a maximum fine of ten cans. (Canned goods are donated to St. Vincent de Paul). Students who damage or lose a library book, textbook, or workbook must pay the replacement cost of the book plus shipping in order to receive a new copy, and this must be paid before any other materials may be checked out.

Transportation

The Otsego Public School District provides bus transportation to and from St. Margaret School. Because of safety factors, it is imperative that students observe all regulations regarding conduct established by the public school transportation department. Parents who provide transportation to and from school are asked to park in the front circle parking lot. **Parents are required to wait until the dismissal bell rings before proceeding down the hallway to pick up their children. Children should be accompanied by a parent at all times.**

Written authorization for a child to go home with a person other than those on our emergency contact list, must be signed and received in the office prior to the child being allowed to leave with that person (or on a different bus, as applicable).

Communication

Communication between school and home is critical to the success of each child. Regular efforts are made to communicate with parents. The principal sends an e-mail letter home on the first day of each week with office reminders from the secretary. Parents should expect to see written communications from each child's teacher. Teachers send weekly communications via email and posted on their classroom website.

Student planners are provided by the school for students in grades 2-8. This valuable tool can serve as a means for daily communication between teachers and parents.

The most effective place to resolve concerns about your child's education is at the level closest to where the concern occurs. In general, your child's teacher should always be the first person with whom you communicate whenever you have a concern. If your concerns are not adequately addressed by the teacher, you should ask the teacher to set up an appointment for you and the teacher to meet together with the principal. The principal will maintain an open door policy to hear the concerns of parents. Scheduling an appointment to see the principal is always preferred.

Local Consultative Advisory Body (LCAB)

LCAB meetings are held monthly August – June. Visitor comments are accepted at these meetings, however, the LCAB will not be expected to respond to visitor comments in open session. If you have a concern or an issue for the agenda, please contact the president of the LCAB in writing stating your concern. The contact information for LCAB members is on the school website.

TECHNOLOGY

Cell Phones

Cell phones and other electronic devices at school are strongly discouraged and cannot be used while the student is in school. Students must keep the cell phones turned off during the school day and in their backpacks. Using a cell phone, except for an emergency, during the school day, during school activities (including field trips or sporting events), is prohibited. It is not the responsibility of the school staff if personal property brought to school is lost, stolen, or damaged.

Social Media

Engagement in online blogs (such as, but not limited to, MySpace.com®, Xanga®, Friendster®, Facebook®, Twitter, etc.) during the school day, or while on school property, may result in disciplinary action, including suspension, and or expulsion. Photos, captions, email, or use of any technology including wearable technology such as a smart watch, or use of any other means of electronic communication that depict the school, faculty, members of the school, or parish community in a defamatory way may result in disciplinary action, *including suspension and or expulsion*.

Cyber Bullying

St. Margaret School works diligently to provide a safe environment for all individuals. A child who feels threatened from a written or other kind of communication, from home, school, or other location, has lost the feeling of security we want to promote. Verbal or written threats, including mean teasing and negative comments, against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual, are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously *or in jest*) face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion.

Technology Use Policy**

St. Margaret School students have the opportunity to use computers, ipads, and Chromebooks as part of their learning experience. Parents and students must sign the **Technology Acceptable Use Agreement** . ***This form may be found at the end of this Handbook.*** The Technology Agreement form is then filed in the school office for the duration of the student's enrollment at St. Margaret's.

Asbestos:

Our school has been inspected for asbestos. At this time all material has been brought up to code. Upon request of the school administrator, this report will be made available for your review. The asbestos binder is kept in the custodian's office. Each year, our maintenance and custodial personnel receive asbestos training.

Medication

State law prohibits the administering of medication, *including aspirin or any other over the counter (OTC) medication* to any student without written permission from the doctor, although the school may give emergency first aid. In the event of an emergency, the school will attempt to notify the parent immediately. For this reason, it is imperative that the school has current phone numbers where a parent may be reached. Parents must supply all medications along with **written** doctor permission *{even for OTC medications for their children.}* Cough drops are included in this prohibition. All emergency and medical forms must be completely filled out by a parent. All medications and over-the-counter medications must be brought to the school office by a parent. The school must be notified if any child suffers from epilepsy, asthma, allergies, or other conditions that might cause fainting or other emergencies, so that proper procedures might be followed with the least possible trauma for the child.

Allergy Policy

St. Margaret School recognizes that an allergy is an important condition affecting many school children and positively welcomes all pupils with allergies. This school encourages children with allergies to achieve their potential in all aspects of school life by having a clear policy that is understood by school staff and pupils. All teachers and staff are made aware of the policy.

Allergies

In order to minimize the incidence of life-threatening allergic reactions, St. Margaret School provides training and education for staff. In conjunction with the student's parent/guardian and primary care provider and/or allergist, the school will maintain an Emergency Action Plan for any student identified with a potentially life-threatening allergy and will include (but not be limited to):

- A description/definition of severe allergies and a discussion of the most common food, medication, latex and stinging insect allergies.
- The signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis.
- The correct use of an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen).
- Specific steps to follow in the event of an emergency.
- Activating Emergency Medical Response - Dial 911.
- Location of emergency EpiPen(s.) (school office)

Asthma Medication

Immediate access to reliever inhalers is vital. Children are encouraged to carry their reliever inhaler, when necessary and with a **written** doctor approval form. Parents are asked to ensure that the school is provided with a labeled spare reliever inhaler. All inhalers must be labeled by the parent with the child's name.

Record Keeping

At the beginning of each school year, or when a child enrolls at St. Margaret School, parents are asked to submit a child's medical record. From this information, the school keeps its asthma register which is available on a need-to-know basis for school staff. If medication changes in between times, parents are required to inform the school.

The school does all that it can to ensure the school environment is favorable to children with asthma or allergies. As far as possible, the school does not use chemicals in science and art lessons that are potential triggers for children with asthma. Please make the school aware if your child might be negatively affected by any materials.

DRUG USE POLICY

The unlawful possession, use, or distribution of tobacco, illicit drugs, and alcohol on school premises or at any of its activities is absolutely prohibited. Attending school or school functions under the influence of illicit drugs and/or alcohol is strictly forbidden. Pretending to use an object as if it were an illegal drug could also result in suspension and/or expulsion. Students who violate these standards of conduct will be promptly disciplined which may include any or all of the following:

- *mandatory conference w/ student, parents, teacher, principal
- *suspension from school
- *referral to law enforcement agencies for prosecution
- *permanent expulsion from school and other administrative action as deemed necessary.

WEAPONS

The safety and welfare of students must be a prioritized concern of all school community members. Therefore, the school environment must be kept free of all weapons and explosive devices. Students who use, possess, handle, transmit, or conceal any object which is, or could be considered a dangerous weapon, or instrument of violence, shall face immediate suspension and/or expulsion. Pretending to use an object as if it were a weapon could result in suspension and/or expulsion. Authorities will be notified if a person is observed carrying a weapon on private school property.

BULLYING

Bullying is a form of harassment. For purposes of this policy, “bullying” is defined as: the repeated intimidation of others by the real or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or emotional abuse or attacks on the property of another. It may include, but not be limited to, actions such as verbal taunts, name-calling and put downs, including ethnically-based or gender-based put-downs, extortion of money or possessions, and exclusions from peer groups within the school. Such conduct is disruptive to the educational process and, therefore, bullying is not acceptable behavior within the school or at any school-sponsored functions. Students who engage in any acts of bullying while at school, at any school function, or in connection to, or with any school-sponsored activity or event, or while in route to or from school, are subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion as may be required by law; law enforcement officials shall be notified of bullying incidents. This policy shall not be interpreted to prohibit a reasoned or civil exchange of opinions or debate, protected by state or federal law.

HARASSMENT

Harassment (or bullying) of any type is not tolerated. The Principal investigates all complaints of harassment. Students involved in harassing behavior face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. St. Margaret School attempts to provide a safe environment for all individuals. Verbal or written threats made against the physical or emotional well-being of any individual are taken very seriously. Students making such threats (seriously or in jest) either verbally or in written communication, face detention, suspension, and/or expulsion. It is the policy of St. Margaret School that mean name-calling, or the use of profane language directed towards a student or staff member, constitutes harassment, regardless of the context.

HAZING

Soliciting, encouraging, aiding, or engaging in “hazing” in school, or on any school property at any time, or in connection with any activity supported or sponsored by the school, whether on or off school property, is strictly prohibited. “Hazing” means any intentional, knowing, or reckless act meant to induce physical pain, embarrassment, humiliation, deprivation of rights that creates physical or mental discomfort that is directed towards a student for the purpose of being initiated into, affiliating with, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization, club, or athletic team sponsored or supported by the school and whose membership is totally or predominately other students from the school. Students engaging in any hazing or hazing-type behavior that is, in any way, connected to any activity sponsored or supported by the school, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

CHILD ABUSE

St. Margaret School abides by the Child Abuse laws of the State of Michigan. The law mandates that all cases of suspected abuse and/or neglect be reported to Child Protective Services. Staff is not required to notify parents/guardians prior to a report to Child Protective Services.

BUCKLEY AMENDMENT/Non-Custodial Parent

St. Margaret School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment with respect to the rights of non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, the school will provide the non-custodial parent access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the student. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given to the non-custodial parent, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the official copy of the court order.

Behavior Expectations and Discipline Philosophy

We are the children of God and as such, all members of our school family are expected to maintain standards of conduct which reflect Christian principles and virtues which follow the teachings of the Catholic Church. All discipline is action-focused on helping students to make positive choices for themselves and for the well-being of every person in our school community. We are different because we live, work and go to school as part of God's family. We are the children of God! Our behavior rubric, uses *Education in Virtue, Disciples of Christ* to teach children that a happy life is a virtuous life. Students are expected to adhere to the classroom expectations and procedures set up by the teacher. Any behavior of a child which interferes with the teaching-learning process will be addressed.

The school makes use of both an aggressive and non-aggressive behavior rubric to provide a more consistent discipline policy within the school. Consequences depend on the severity of the offense. All inappropriate behavior infractions are monitored and recorded for the school year by the homeroom teacher, regardless of who witnesses the behavior. These records do not become a part of the child's permanent record.

Suspension

Students who are given an in-school suspension will be required to report to school each day and do school work. Students who receive an out-of-school suspension will not be allowed on campus during the time of their suspension. Students must complete all class work and tests from the days of suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion is an extremely serious matter. Students who pose a threat to themselves or to others may be expelled from school. Students who have been expelled will not be allowed to return to the school without prior permission from the Principal.

Cafeteria Expectations:

- Use an indoor voice.
- Welcome anyone who would like to sit next to you.
- When you need something, please raise your hand and ask for assistance.
- Permission must be given to be out of your seat.
- Stay in the cafeteria unless you have been given permission to go to the restroom, to get a drink, or retrieve something from your classroom.
- Practice good table manners and avoid disturbing other students.
- Show respect to all, and follow the directions of all supervisors.
- Walk at all times in the building, including the cafeteria.
- Lights out means complete silence to listen to directions.
- Please remain in your seat until your table is dismissed.

- Clean up all of your garbage, and wait in hallway in single line before being dismissed to go to recess.

Playground Expectations: Students are expected to abide by the following at all times:

- Stay within the boundaries that include the school on the east, the grassy field on the north, the fence on the west, and the fence on the south.
- Students may leave the playground only with permission.
- Students will only be allowed to go back into school with adult permission, and only if it is an emergency.
- Respect everyone: no offensive language, or name calling. Any sign of disrespect is not tolerated.
- Share the space and the playground equipment.
- No food, drink, gum or candy is allowed at recess.
- Activities that could cause injury are not allowed. This includes, but is not limited to, throwing rocks, stones, and snowballs. The playground supervisors have the authority to stop any activity deemed unsafe or inappropriate.
- Rough games of tackle football or tackle tag or any other threatening behavior is not allowed.
- The inappropriate behavior policy is applicable to playground activities.
- Refusal to follow the playground rules could result in disciplinary action.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Parents are responsible for transportation to/from these activities. During on-site activities, students will not be allowed to leave the school grounds. Siblings of athletes are not allowed to attend the practices, nor are they allowed to play outside without adult supervision. As a rule, siblings are never to be left unattended or unsupervised at any time while in or around the school building.

FIELD TRIPS

Occasionally, students may have an opportunity go on a class field trip. The school bus may be used for field trips. All students must have a signed permission slip before they are allowed to go on field trips. Students who fail to provide written permission slips for field trips will not be allowed to participate.

Parent volunteers who wish to chaperone or accompany students on field trips, need to attend a training session for *Protecting God's Children*. These sessions are held frequently at different locations throughout the Diocese and dates/times are listed in the Principal's weekly newsletter. Parents need to complete an authorization form allowing the school administrator to do a criminal record check, or iChat, which is also required before any parent can chaperone or accompany students on field trips.

Field trips are a privilege and not a right! If a student is serving a consequence for inappropriate behavior, we reserve the right to not allow them to attend a field trip.

1. Field trips are designed to correlate with teaching units and to achieve curricular goals.
2. Field trips are re-evaluated each year to determine compatibility with curricular goals.
3. There are no "traditional" field trips. Class participation in a particular field trip over consecutive years does not mean that this trip has become a school tradition.
4. All grades do not always have the same number of field trips.
5. Field trips are permissible for all grades when advanced planning, location, and the experience insure a successful learning opportunity.
6. Individual teachers, in consultation with the Administration, reserve the right to restrict or deny student participation on any field trip due to, but not limited to, poor academic performance and/or poor conduct.
7. A written official permission slip, signed by the parent, is required before a child will be permitted to attend a field trip activity. A fax does not take the place of an original signature.
8. Parents may refuse to permit their child from participating in a field trip by stating so on the proper form. Students who do not attend a field trip will remain at home with the parent and will be marked absent for the day.

9. Students who are participating in the field trip must ride the bus to and from the field trip with their class. Students not on the bus may not participate in the field trip and will be counted absent for the day.
10. All monies collected for the field trip are **non-refundable**.
11. **Cell phones** are **not allowed** on field trips unless otherwise directed by the teacher and/or administration.
12. Parents who are not “official” chaperones **may not** drive their car to a field trip destination with the plan of accompanying the class on the field trip. Our risk management insurance company insures the “official” chaperones and participation by unofficial chaperones jeopardizes the protection for our students and all other “official” adults on the trip. Parents who chaperone a field trip may not bring pre-school or school-age siblings on the field trip.

UNIFORM DRESS CODE

A Christian environment is essential to provide each student with the best education possible. An important aspect of this learning environment is the physical appearance of all students. The dress code guidelines are based on a plaid design. This plaid is the only plaid allowed with our dress code.

The uniform is an option for preschool students, and is not required

Website: www.frenchtoast.com
School Code: QS5PHSH
1-800-636-3104

BOYS

- Light blue, button-down collar, short or long-sleeve shirt
- Navy pants

OPTIONS:

- Navy v-neck vest
- Red, v-neck, front-buttoned down, long-sleeve sweater
- Boys’ plaid uniform tie
- Navy shorts as a warm weather option (Aug.-Sept. & May-June)
- Red pique polo shirt with three-button placket and collar, short or long-sleeved
- Shorts must be long enough to measure three inches above the knee.

GIRLS

- White, short or long sleeved blouse with round or pointed collar, **and** one of the following:
- Navy pant, navy scooter skirt, or plaid skooter skirt

OPTIONS:

- Navy v-neck vest
- Red, crew neck, front-buttoned down, long-sleeve sweater
- Girls’ plaid uniform tie
- Navy shorts as a warm weather option (Aug.-Sept. & May-June)
- Red pique polo shirt with three-button placket and collar, short or long-sleeve
- Shorts and skorts must be long enough to measure three inches above the knee.

Socks must be worn at all times! Socks and tights must be solid colors only. Sandals, clogs and crocs, any kind of slip-on shoe or sling back, fashion boots, or high heels higher than one inch, are not allowed.

Coats, fleece jackets, hats, sunglasses, or other outerwear may not be worn in school. Only the official navy fleece with the school logo may be worn while in school.

Hairstyles should not be distracting: no unnatural coloring or shaving such as Mohawks. No makeup or dangling earrings on either boys or girls. Additionally, nail polish and false nails are prohibited.

All clothing should fit well, not too tight or baggy. Shirts must be tucked in at all times. Collars must be worn and visible when wearing sweaters or vests.

We want to be proud of how our students look in their dress code clothes. The Principal has the final word in deciding if a student is not within the guidelines of the dress code.

FEED OUR FRIENDS-CASUAL DAYS

Periodically, students have a day from the dress code on Feed Our Friends-Casual Days. The purpose of this day is to raise money for our sister parish in Haiti. We call this day, "Feed Our Friends Day." It's a pay-to-wear casual clothes day. These usually fall on the last Friday of the month. Watch the notes from the office for changes in these uniform holidays, or to see if we set a special theme.

ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

BLOOD-BORNE PATHOGENS

St. Margaret School complies with all Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards for the handling of blood-borne pathogens and all other bodily fluids. All staff are appropriately trained in the proper handling and disposal of bodily fluids. Staff members have access to kits that contain latex-free gloves and other materials that enable them to help in a medical emergency without endangering themselves or others. St. Margaret School plan of action is available in the school office.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All students entering St. Margaret School for the first time must be immunized in accordance with state law. Immunization records or a signed waiver must be on file in the school office before a child may start school. In addition, the immunization status of each kindergarten and 7th grade student will be assessed for compliance with state guidelines

PESTICIDE USE

As a part of St. Margaret School's pest management program, pesticides are occasionally applied. Parents have a right to be informed of any pesticide application made to the school ground or buildings. In certain cases, pesticides may be applied without prior notice, but parents will be provided notice if it is the parent's desire. If notification of pesticide application is needed, parents are to submit their request in writing expressing the desire to be notified of pesticide treatment inside the building, or on outside grounds, or both. Pesticides are only administered by trained professionals. We retain Rose Pest Management for monitoring and treatment of pests.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Fire, tornado and crisis response drills are conducted in compliance with State and Diocesan guidelines. In the course of the year we conduct 5 fire, 2 tornado, and 3 lockdown drills. Documentation of completed drills are posted on our website within thirty days after completion. A list of scheduled drills is sent to the county emergency management coordinator at the beginning of each year. Our cardiac emergency response plan mandates the use of an AED when necessary, and regular maintenance of our automated external defibrillator, which is available in the main hallway near the gym.

Fire Drill Procedures

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Walk to the assigned place briskly, in single file at all times, and in silence;
3. Stand in a column of two's, facing the building;
4. Return to building when signal is given.

Tornado Drill Procedures

1. Rise in silence when the alarm sounds;
2. Walk briskly to the assigned place in single file;
3. Sit, face wall, and put hands over head;
4. Return to classroom when signal is given.

Crisis Response and Lockdown Procedures

St. Margaret School has a crisis response plan in place that is reviewed annually with all staff at the beginning of each school year. The front office maintains communications with Emergency Service Personnel.

Locked Door Policy

To insure your child's safety, everyone needs to enter the school through the main entrance of the building. All doors are locked during the school day, however doors can be used to exit the building. All students are instructed never to open doors for anyone during the regular school day. Please do not come to these doors and ask the students to open them. This policy enhances building safety and security. We request that all visitors *always sign in and out in the school office.*

Emergency Notifications, Inclement Weather, School Closings

St. Margaret School subscribes to the Honeywell Alert System. Parents are asked to complete contact information at the beginning of each school year to be sure we have correct information in case of emergency. In the event of school closings, last minute announcements, or other emergencies, the administration will send out a notice via this system.

St. Margaret School will follow Otsego Public Schools in determining inclement weather closings and delays. In addition to sending out a Honeywell Alert, the school will make every effort to post closings on local TV and radio stations.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar will follow Otsego Public Schools (OPS) as much as possible for days off. However, this is not always possible. OPS operates on a trimester schedule while St. Margaret School is on a quarterly schedule.

OFFICE TELEPHONE

Permission to use the telephone must be obtained from the school secretary. Students must submit a note from their teacher. The office phone is a business phone and students are permitted to use it only in case of an emergency. Forgotten homework, athletic equipment, etc. do not constitute emergencies. Arrangements for after-school visits with friends should be made at home.

Lost and Found

Any items found in the school building or on the school grounds should be given to the school secretary to be placed in the Lost and Found. Items placed in the Lost and Found remain there for ten days. After ten days, items are donated to charity.

Visitors

School visitors (volunteers, parents, etc.) must come to the main office. For safety and security reasons, each person is required to sign in at the office when he/she enters the building for any reason. Visitors and/or volunteers are to sign out at the time of departure. Parents who volunteer to work lunch/recess or

who volunteer in another capacity in the school may not drop in to a classroom to see their child during the day. This is an interruption to the teacher and to the educational process.

Photo/Video Release

St. Margaret School has the occasional opportunity to have student pictures in newspapers, on the web, or in other local publications. A separate **Photo/Video Release Form must be signed** by a parent/guardian giving approval before your child's photo can be used in school publications. This form must be completed, signed and returned to the school office at the beginning of each school year.

Parent Service Hours

In addition to meeting the financial obligation of your tuition contract, each family is expected to contribute service hours. In this way, parents help to support the activities and projects that continue to provide our excellent school environment. There are many opportunities for parents to fulfill their obligation: serving on a school or fundraising committee, working as a lunchroom and/or recess monitor, and volunteering in your child's classroom are only a few examples.

School's Right to Amend

St. Margaret School reserves the right to amend this Handbook. Notice of amendments will be sent to parents.

Parents as Partners

As partners in the educational process at St. Margaret Catholic School, we ask parents to:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

(please sign and return signed form to school)

Adapted from NCEA's From the Chalkboard to the Chat room.

As a user of technology, including the computers at school, I agree to follow the rules and code of ethics in all of my work and communication, while attending St. Margaret School:

1. I recognize that all computer users have the same right to use the equipment; therefore, I will not use the computer resources for non-academic purposes. I will not waste or take supplies such as paper, printer cartridges, and discs that are provided by the school. When I am in the computer lab, I will talk softly and work in ways that will not disturb other users. I will keep my computer work area clean and will not eat or drink in the computer lab.

2. I recognize that software is protected by copyright laws; therefore, I will not make unauthorized copies of software and I will not give, lend, or sell copies of software to others. I understand that I will not be allowed to bring software applications, games, CD-ROMs, or DVDs from home to be used on school equipment without proof of licensure and prior approval of appropriate school personnel.

3. I recognize that the work of all users is valuable; therefore, I will protect the privacy of others by not using their passwords; I will not copy, change, read, or use files from another user without prior permission from that user, and the appropriate personnel. I will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs for computer equipment; ***I will not violate any school rules on computer systems, cell phones, ipads, or while using other kinds of technology either at home, or at school, or other locations, to disturb or harass other members of our school and parish community.*** I will honor my school's procedures for the storage of information. I realize that after prior notice has been given to me, files may be deleted from the system to protect the integrity of the network or because of space limitations on the computer's hard drive.

4. The use of the internet must be in support of education and research consistent with the educational objectives of the school. Students using network or computing resources must comply with the appropriate rules for that network or resource.

5. As a user of a network, I will not use bulletin boards or chat lines for personal use. In addition, I will not reveal my personal information, home address, or personal phone number or those of students, teachers, or other staff members. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. The use of school computers and networking resources for commercial activities is not permitted. Their use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

6. The student is responsible for not pursuing material that could be considered offensive.

7. The use of the computer is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in the cancellation of these privileges. Vandalism or intentional modification of system settings will result in cancellation of privileges and/or school disciplinary action. The school reserves the right to seek financial restitution for any damage caused by a student or other user. The system administrators will deem what is inappropriate use, and their decision is final. The administration, faculty, and staff of the school may request that the system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges. Violations of the rules and code of ethics described above will be dealt with seriously.

Parent/Student Signature Page

I have read the 2018-2019 Parent-Student Handbook and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement and agree to follow the school policies and procedures as stated.

Parent Signature _____

Date _____

Signature of children:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

SIGNED FORM DUE TO SCHOOL at the beginning of the school year.