

# **ST. MARGARET SCHOOL**



## **PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2020-2021**

**736 S. Farmer Street, Otsego, MI 49078**

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

**[www.stmargaretschool.net](http://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](mailto:ewarnez@stmargaretschool.net)

269-694-2951

## **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. Christ is part of our everyday living experience in the classrooms.

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.

## **Statement of Faith**

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, regardless of faith, take part in liturgical and Eucharistic services in accordance with Catholic doctrine.

## **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 & Tuition

### 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 1<sup>st</sup>. 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.

### Tuition Scale

<b>PRESCHOOL</b>		
3 year old half-day (Tuesday and Thursday)	\$1,120	
3 year old full day (Tuesday and Thursday)	\$2,016	
4 year old half-day (M-W-F)	\$1,383	
4 year old full day (M-W-F)	\$2,598	
<b>GRADES K-8</b> number of students in family:	Parishioner (registered member of St. Margaret or Blessed Sacrament)	Out of Parish
<b>1</b>	\$3,575	\$4,575
<b>2</b>	\$2,264	\$2,964
<b>3</b>	\$1,413	\$1,913
<b>4</b>	\$1,262	\$1,572

### 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 per student (max \$125 per family), 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 1<sup>st</sup>. 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 below). Parishioners of other Catholic parishes may receive a subsidy from their parish; please contact your parish church office for information.

### **Remote Education**

If the State of Michigan requires all schools to close and move to remote learning or if the Allegan County Health Department requires St. Margaret School to close and move to remote learning, parents will still be required to continue with tuition payments. St. Margaret School is a tuition based school and if we are required to move to remote learning our teachers will continue to provide instruction for each student.

### **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.*

### **Withdrawal Policy**

- Families must notify the school *in writing* if a student is withdrawn from the school.
- A pro-rated tuition rate will be determined based upon the date the withdraw letter was received in the school office.
- A \$100 book and administration fee will be added to the pro-rated tuition that was calculated.

## School and Activities

### Absences/Tardies

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.

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.

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.

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.

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. Assignments given in anticipation of the vacation is at the teacher's discretion.** 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.

A student is considered tardy if he/she:

- Arrives to class after the starting bell (8:25 am)
- Leaves during the school day for less than an hour for an appointment

A student is considered absent for a half-day if he/she:

- Arrives to class after 9:25 am
- Leaves during the school day for more than an hour for an appointment

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 1½ absences for the entire year will be awarded an Excellent Attendance Certificate.

### **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.

### **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. If school is delayed then child care is also delayed (i.e. if school is delayed 2 hours, then child care will open 2 hours later, at 9:00 am).

### **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 post on their classroom website.

Student planners are provided by the school for students in grades 3-8. 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, a meeting should be requested involving all parties together with the principal. Scheduling an appointment to see the principal is necessary.

### **Conferences**

Conferences are scheduled twice during the school year. If a parent wishes to confer with a teacher at any other 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.

### **Curriculum**

St. Margaret School offers students opportunities for learning in the subject areas of Theology, Math, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Arts (includes grammar, reasoning, literature, writing, speaking, listening, and research). St. Margaret School follows the curriculum guidelines set by the Diocese of Kalamazoo Office of Schools. 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, 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.

### **Mathematics**

Students receive instruction in the math content areas of number and operations, algebra, geometry and measurement, and data in each grade level. 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.

### **Social Studies**

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

### **Physical Education**

All students receive instruction in physical education.

### **Communication Technology**

All students receive instruction in communication technology. Technology is integrated with other curricular areas and the use of computers, Chromebooks and iPads are embedded in other coursework throughout the school day.

### **Fine Arts**

All students receive instruction in visual and performing arts.

## **Field Trips**

Occasionally, students may have an opportunity go on a class field trip. A 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. 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.

## **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 70% to 89%; Not Proficient is under 69%. 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	94-100%
A-	90-93%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	60-66%
F	0-59%

### **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.

### **Local Consultative Advisory Body (LCAB)**

LCAB meetings are held monthly August – June. The LCAB is similar to a school board. 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.

### **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.

### **Lunch**

Students bring their own lunch to school on each full day of school. Microwaves are available for reheating of lunches. Students may 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.

### **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.

### **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: working at the annual Halloween Carnival, 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.

### **Promotion/Placement/Retention**

At the end of the academic year, students will be either promoted, placed in the next grade, or retained in their current grade. Promotion indicates the student has demonstrated readiness for the next grade level of study. Placement 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.

### **Remote Learning**

Should St. Margaret School be required to move to remote learning, each teacher will provide instruction and assignments appropriate for their class. Students are expected to complete all assignments and participate in all virtual classroom activities. Assignments and assessments will continue to be graded according to the scale referenced above.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

## **Transportation**

The Otsego Public School District provides bus transportation to and from St. Margaret School for those students who live within the Otsego School District boundaries. Students are required to adhere to and follow 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 (3:30 pm) 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 the 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).

## **Student Expectations**

### **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. 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.

### **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 (to purchase plaid uniform):** [www.frenchtoast.com](http://www.frenchtoast.com)  
**School Code: QS5PHSH**  
**1-800-636-3104**

## **Boys**

- Pants and shorts: navy or khaki
- Cargo style and jean style pants and shorts are not allowed; pockets may not have rivets
- Shirts: Light blue, button-down collar, short or long-sleeve shirt; red, navy blue or light blue short or long sleeve pique polo shirt
- Navy school fleece purchased through the school
- Red front-buttoned down, long-sleeve sweater
- Boys' plaid uniform tie available from French Toast
- Shorts as a warm weather option during the months of Aug, Sept, May & June
- Shorts must be approaching the knee

## **Girls**

- Pants, shorts, skirts and skorts: navy or khaki
- Cargo style and jean style pants and shorts are not allowed; pockets may not have rivets
- Shirts: white short or long sleeved blouse; red, navy blue or light blue short or long sleeve pique polo shirt
- Navy school fleece purchased through the school
- Red front-buttoned down, long-sleeve sweater
- Girls' plaid uniform skirt, skort and tie available from French Toast
- Shorts and skorts as a warm weather option during the months of Aug, Sept, May & June
- Shorts, skirts and skorts must be approaching the knee

Note: for certain school events, students will be required to wear the SMS Pride Uniform which is a red polo shirt and navy bottoms.

**Socks must be worn at all times!** Knee-high 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, 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.

**ALL UNIFORM REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES, INCLUDING CASUAL DAY CLOTHING, ARE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE ADMINISTRATION.**

## **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.

## **Feed Our Friends-Casual Days**

Periodically, students have a day off 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. 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. While students may generally wear clothing of their choice, students may not wear clothing with inappropriate or offensive language or pictures, tank tops, spaghetti straps, tight or ill-fitting clothing. All clothing should fit well, not too tight.

## **Technology**

### **Cell Phones**

Cell phones, smart watches and other electronic devices are not allowed to be used while the student is in school or under the supervision of St. Margaret School staff (i.e. Kid's Klub). Students must keep electronic devices 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), or at Kid's Klub 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: Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, 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.*

## **Safety & Security**

### **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.

### **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.

## **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.

## **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. The Technology Acceptable Use Agreement addresses cyber bullying and all policies within that agreement are not superseded by this policy.

## **COVID-19**

St. Margaret School will adhere to guidelines and recommendations set by the State of Michigan, Allegan County Health Department, and the Diocese of Kalamazoo. Our COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan can be found on the school’s website.

## **Drug Use Policy**

The unlawful possession, use, or distribution of tobacco, illicit drugs, vaping devices, 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. 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.

## **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 stations.

## **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. 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.

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.

### **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.

### **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 student will be assessed for compliance with state guidelines.

### **Locked Door Policy**

To ensure 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.*

### **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 and clear dosing instructions (*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.

### **Pesticide Use**

State of Michigan law requires schools and day care centers that may apply pesticides on school or day care property to provide an annual advisory to parents or guardians of students attending the facility.

Please be advised that St. Margaret School utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control pests. One of the objectives of using an IPM approach is to reduce or eliminate the need for chemical applications of pesticides. However, certain situations may require the need for pesticides to be utilized.



As required by State of Michigan law, you will receive advance notice regarding the non-emergency application of a pesticide such as an insecticide, fungicide, or herbicide, other than a bait or gel formulation, that is made to the school during this school year. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without prior notice to prevent injury to students, but you will be notified following any such application.

Advanced notification of pesticide applications, *other than bait or gel formulation*, will be given by two methods. First, notices will be posted at the main entrance to the school. Second, notices will be placed in the weekly principal newsletter that is emailed home and posted on the school's website.

Please be advised that parents or guardians of children attending the school may request to receive the advance notice of pesticide application, *other than bait or gel formulation*, by first class USPS postmarked at least 3 days before the pesticide application. If preferred, parents must notify the school of the desire to receive notification by mail by completing the information of the registration form.

Please be advised that parents or guardians of the children attending St. Margaret School may review the school's IPM program and records of any pesticide application upon request. Parents should contact the front office with this request.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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. Authorities will be notified if a person is observed carrying a weapon on private school property.

### **School's Right to Amend**

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

## 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;
4. ***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.***
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. The student is responsible for not pursuing material that could be considered offensive
9. 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.
10. 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 2020-2021 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.