



**2017-2018**

# ***PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK***

- Immunization policy (including those without and excluding as necessary)
- Confiscating phones and parental permission

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**\* The handbook is available on the St. Mark's Cathedral School website**

## **St. Mark's Cathedral School-Parent Covenant**

This covenant is founded on the belief that parents and the school must maintain a partnership in all aspects of school life. It articulates reasonable expectations and clarifies relationships to benefit the children in the school.

### **What parents can expect from St. Mark's:**

- St. Mark's will strive to maintain a safe, secure, and welcoming environment and will react actively to any reports or threats of danger.
- St. Mark's will inform parents immediately of a serious disciplinary infraction involving their child.
- Teachers will communicate regularly with parents about their children with quarterly report cards, progress reports, and other messages about student progress or challenges.
- Teachers will schedule regular conferences and, when warranted, additional meetings. Student assessments will be presented thoughtfully and carefully in writing and in person.
- Teachers will respond to non-emergency parent inquiries made on school days in a timely fashion, usually within 24 hours.
- Parents can expect timely notification if a child encounters academic difficulties and will be kept informed of follow-up plans, actions, and strategies.
- Teachers will define student expectations on Curriculum Night. Personal responsibility is expected to increase as students progress to middle school.
- All members of the school will model civility in all student and parent interactions. Teachers will treat parents as experts about their own children--experts who contribute to the dialogue about maximizing effectiveness in working with the student.

### **What St. Mark's can expect from parents:**

- Parents will support and encourage their children, providing structure and routines to help them develop self-discipline and good study habits.
- Parents will endorse the mission of the school. They will read and comply with the Parent/Student Handbook. They will attend conferences and support and take part in the activities and work of the Parents' Club.
- Parents will be supportive and respectful of the school's policies and its academic and disciplinary decisions. Parents will listen to, supervise, and hold their children accountable with consequences for inappropriate behavior.
- Parents will let students be responsible for their own work, recognizing that mistakes and disappointments are sometimes necessary in learning accountability and resiliency.
- Parents will model civility and integrity for their children. Parents will demonstrate respect for teachers in front of students. Parents will treat teachers as allies and professionals who understand childhood development.
- Parents will register dissatisfactions in a responsible and fair way and seek collaborative solutions to problems by using the proper channels (1st individual teacher, 2nd division director, 3rd head of school).
- Parents will be respectful of teachers' time and responsibilities, in and out of the classroom. Parents will remember that instant communication isn't always the best communication and resolving issues can take time.

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is provided to the parents and students to offer guidelines and information concerning the policies of St. Mark's Cathedral School. While every attempt has been made to be as thorough as possible, some situations may arise which are not covered by this Handbook, in which case the School administration will act in the best interests of the students and the school and in accord with the general principles of this handbook.

**The registration of a student at St. Mark's Cathedral School is considered by the school to indicate that the student and the parents accept all the rules, regulations and policies of the school, including the judgment of school authorities in these areas. In accordance with the School-Parent Covenant, each parent assumes responsibility for cooperating with all of the school policies, rules and regulations.**

### Non-Discrimination Statement

As an Episcopal School, St. Mark's Cathedral School strives to uphold the baptismal covenant to respect the dignity and worth of every human being. Accordingly, St. Mark's Cathedral School admits students of any race, religion, color, national and ethnic origin and accords to them all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, athletic or other school-administered programs.

### St. Mark's Cathedral School Mission Statement

St. Mark's Mission is to value the individual who comes to us, help that student to realize his or her potential, and to foster a culture that reflects Christian values, intellectual curiosity, and a strong work ethic. Our goal is to develop a student who feels self-confident educationally, socially, and spiritually, and can reach out to help others in our community.

### Philosophy

The development of an effective educational program within a Christian context requires a recognition of these truths: that each student is a child of God and, as such, has his or her own strengths, aptitudes, abilities, interests and aims which, together, share the unique personality that is his/her own.

St. Mark's Cathedral School shares with other independent schools a commitment to the individual as the foundation of its philosophy. Our regular, joint services of Christian worship give focus and meaning to our community, celebrating the individual even as we weave together the many strands into the unified whole.

To the greatest extent possible, then, St. Mark's Cathedral School concentrates its concerns on the personal growth of each student. To this end the school strives for a balanced emphasis upon the academic, athletic, and aesthetic – the sensory, social and spiritual – in an environment conducive to the highest achievement possible within the confines of each individual's abilities.

It is our responsibility to work in cooperation with each family as we teach their children to meet their responsibilities, be considerate of others, face up to challenges, discipline themselves, and develop lifelong habits of industry that will prepare them for further education and productive lives.

As an academic institution, the school is committed to providing learning experiences that are both lively and rigorous. The curriculum routinely is challenged to insure its continued ability to provide enrichment beyond the essentials.

Ultimately, it is our goal to serve as a meaningful prelude for the future, a future full of unknowns and yet embraced with faith and confidence by those who have passed through St. Mark's Cathedral School.

## **Goals and Objectives**

We define education as the development of all the talents with which a child has been endowed: intellectual, moral, emotional, physical and spiritual. We have firm notions about the characteristics we seek to instill and nurture in our youthful student: self-respect, respect for others, respect for education, and Christian charity. We further believe that an education which ignores the presence and the power of God is, by definition, incomplete.

Because we are a school, we are committed to academic excellence and our goal is to strive to help each student reach his full scholastic potential. In order to achieve this, we seek to be a disciplined school – firm, fair, consistent, and considerate. Because we are a Christian school, we understand that there is more to a child than just a mind; there is also a heart and a soul.

We believe that a child needs to learn that he is loved and he needs to learn to give love in return. As a result of this conviction, the school seeks to establish a community of those who teach, those who learn, and those who care about each other.

Students are expected to honor the academic standards and the expectation of the school regarding behavior, dress and grooming.

It is imperative that parents and students know and understand that the purpose and philosophy of SMCS. The school cannot expect support if families do not know what is expected. The family should examine and evaluate the tenets that this school embraces. SMCS's objectives of academic excellence and Christian ideals can succeed only if its students are drawn from homes in which these principles are honored and practiced.

### ACADEMIC/INTELLECTUAL

**GOAL:** To obtain an academically excellent education for the whole child

**OBJECTIVES:**

- to develop a foundation of fundamental skills
- to seek, gather, organize and synthesize information
- to use learning strategies to help understand and apply new materials and skills
- to be a critical thinker
- to be a lifelong learner

- to be a member of an information-literate school community

## SPIRITUAL

**GOAL:** To be aware of God's love, power and presence in our lives and to live our lives to live out our faith daily

### OBJECTIVES:

- to proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ
- to seek and serve Christ in all persons
- to strive for justice and peace among all persons
- to respect the dignity of every human being
- to experience our faith story through Scripture, tradition and reason
- to enrich our faith community by participating in corporate worship and in service to others

## SOCIAL/ATHLETIC

**GOAL:** to cultivate and reflect all facets of personality as a child of God

### OBJECTIVES:

- to be cooperative in the learning environment
- to use information to make effective decisions
- to accept responsibility for one's own actions
- to be willing to make mistakes and take risks in order to learn
- to realize the importance of physical exercise in developing a healthy mind, body and attitude
- to be good stewards of one's resources, talents, time and the world
- to respect the cultural and religious diversity of our students and families

## **The Portrait of a St. Mark's Cathedral School Graduate**

*Adopted by the Faculty, Spring 2008*

*Revised, Fall 2012*

- ❖ A St. Mark's student has a vision for a limitless future.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student is able to voice concerns, beliefs, questions, and doubts, knowing that what he or she says matters.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student has love for God and for all people.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student can listen to and feel empathy for others.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student has a heart for giving and receiving.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student is armed with an academic base second to none, and is confident that he or she can compete and triumph in any situation.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student is well-equipped for the changing world of technology.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student is well-written, well-spoken, and well-regarded.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student has an appreciation for the arts.
- ❖ A St. Mark's student is a leader, a role model, a contributor, and an influence in the local, national, and global community.

## THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The St. Mark's Cathedral School community consists of many groups, including the students, parents, faculty, staff, and alumni of the school, along with the clergy, staff, and parishioners of St. Mark's Cathedral. All these groups interact together on the Cathedral campus, and each plays a role in the life of the school.

### **St. Mark's Cathedral**

The Cathedral Church of St. Mark serves as the chief church of the Diocese of Western Louisiana. The Bishop of Western Louisiana has his *cathedra* or "throne" here, and the cathedral is in fact his church, but the diocesan offices are in Alexandria and the Bishop spends most Sundays of the year visiting all the parishes of the diocese, so he is only in the Cathedral a few times per year. The Bishop usually conducts the school chapel for St. Mark's Day on April 25. Since the Bishop is not normally present, the cathedral is led by the Dean, the senior priest of the parish. The Dean is ultimately responsible for all that happens at St. Mark's Cathedral.

The temporal and financial affairs of the Cathedral are governed by the Vestry, elected lay members of the Cathedral congregation. The Senior Warden is the chief lay leader of the Vestry, and the Junior Warden is specifically charged with overseeing the facilities. The Dean is empowered by the Vestry to call such additional clergy and staff as he may need to run the programs of the Cathedral. Assisting priests at cathedrals are often called "canons." Cathedral staff keep the master calendar for the facility and make the decisions to allocate space for any programs, cathedral or school.

The School is a major ministry of the Cathedral, and many of our facility costs are borne by the Cathedral. The School and Cathedral leaderships work hard to coordinate activities and support each others' ministries. It is important for parents to recognize the many needs and ministries of the Cathedral of which they may be unaware. Funerals, wedding rehearsals, ordinations, and other important liturgies, along with the meetings of various groups may occur during the school day and may on occasion necessitate changes in the school day, especially the carpool. Parents are asked to be cognizant of the needs of parishioners. In particular, please observe the handicapped parking signs so that parishioners who need those parking spots will always have them when needed.

### **The School Board**

The role of the St. Mark's Cathedral School Board is to establish policy and insure the financial stability of the school. Members of the board do not supervise employees or operations of the school nor do they represent special interest groups. The Head of School represents the school to the School Board and reports at each regular board meeting. The Board consists of the Dean, Wardens, and twelve to fifteen individuals. At least 60% of the School Board must be communicants in good standing of St. Mark's Cathedral. New School board members are nominated by the School Board itself but formally elected by the Vestry. Each board member serves a term of three years. The Dean may, if he so chooses, invite the current president of the Parents' Club and/or the immediate past Chairman of the Board to serve as ex officio members of the board.

## **SMCS School Board 2017-2018**

David Roberts, President (2019)  
Deana Kalmbach, Secretary (2019)  
Chris Walls, Treasurer (2018)  
The Very Reverend Alston Johnson, Dean  
Lad Shemwell, Senior Warden  
Bill Kalmbach, Junior Warden  
Todd Blanchard (2018)  
Nancy Cooper (2018)  
Lennis Elston (2018)  
Cissie Smith (2018)  
David Renda (2019)  
Alex Rowe (2019)  
Leslie Scott (2019)  
Lloyd Brown (2020)  
Holly Cook (2020)  
Jamie Eagles (2020)  
Michael Lowe (2020)  
William Weaver (2020)  
Michel Fritze, Parents' Club President 2017-18

## **The Parents' Club**

The purpose of this official parent organization is to develop friendship and cooperation among parents, staff, administration, and the Cathedral. Its objectives include promoting interest and support in the school's academic, cultural, and athletic programs; and raising funds to aid in the development and expansion of the school's facilities and equipment. It acts as a liaison between parents, faculty and the School Board. The by-laws of the Parents' Club may be found toward the end of this handbook.

## **Parents' Club Officers 2017-18**

Michel Fritze, President  
Liz Comegys, Vice-president  
Tricia Q=Petersen, Secretary  
Michelle Roberts, Treasurer

## **Administration**

The Preschool, Lower School, and Middle School each have their own division director who manages the day to day affairs of curriculum, pedagogy, and discipline in their division. The division director is the primary resource for parents about academic or behavioral concerns after they have spoken with the teacher. Additional members of the administrative team include the Director of Admissions and Communication, the Business Manager, the Accounts Manager/Registrar, the Director of Development, the Athletic Director, the Librarian/Director of Technology, the School Chaplain/Asst. Middle School Director, and the School Secretary. See the "Who's Who and Whom to Call" section at the end of this handbook to help you know who might best help you.



# ADMISSIONS

## Admission Policy

Among the factors considered for entrance to St. Mark's Cathedral School are character, interests, ability, record of achievement, class diversity, parent and/or student commitment to learning, and the ability of the school to serve the needs of the student. St. Mark's admits students of any race, color, religion, or national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

The school facilities are provided and supported by St. Mark's Cathedral. Because St. Mark's is family-oriented, faculty children, qualified siblings, and members of the Cathedral are given preference in admission. After classes are filled, qualified students are placed in a waiting pool. As openings occur, these students are offered admission. All fees and tuition payments must be received by the date specified in the enrollment contract.

## Admission Procedures

Parents of prospective students are encouraged to call the Director of Admission to schedule a time to tour the facilities and find out more about our program.

The Application Form: The first step to enrollment is to submit a completed application with the non-refundable application fee of \$50.

Candidates for Preschool must meet the following age requirements:

Applicants to Preschool 2 must be two years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year.

Applicants to Preschool 3 must be three years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of admission ***and completely toilet-trained before the school year begins.***

Applicants to Preschool 4 and Kindergarten must be four or five years of age respectively on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of admission.

Applicants to First Grade must be six years old on or before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the year of admission.

Classroom Visit: Students seeking admission to grades 1-8 are invited to visit in a classroom and "shadow" with their peers. Students in grades PS 2-K will have a scheduled play date at designated times during the spring before enrollment.

Admissions Criteria: Admission is based upon the applicant's demonstration of academic ability that will ensure success at St. Mark's. Such an assessment for preschool students will be made through observation and one-on-one interaction by the preschool faculty. Assessment for grades K-8 includes evaluation of standardized and/or admission test scores; report cards from earlier schooling, including conduct grades; teacher recommendations; and observation from personal interactions. The Admissions Committee, made up of the Admissions Director, Division Head, and Head of School, determines acceptance.

Admission Tests: Applicants to grades K through 8 may be tested prior to admission in order to determine that the candidate could be successful at St. Mark's. Such testing will be determined

on a case by case basis, depending upon the age and educational experience of the applicant. In general, testing will be used when the applicant does not have standardized testing available for the school to review, or if standardized tests, report cards or teacher recommendations do not present adequate information for a determination of acceptance or placement.

Teacher Evaluation: A teacher recommendation form is requested for each student entering K through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and from any preschool applicants who have been in a structured school/daycare environment before coming to St. Mark's. The teacher evaluation form is found in the online application and sent via email to the applicant's current teacher

Acceptance and Enrollment: Candidates who are accepted are requested to complete and return an enrollment contract along with registration fees to the school by the specified return date. The school will reserve a place for the candidate until that date, but cannot guarantee a place after that time.

***Before any student is permitted to attend classes, copies of a birth certificate and immunization records must be on file. The student's emergency data form, medical form, and field trip permission and waiver form must be updated and completed via the ParentsWeb online parent portal.***

## **Financial Aid:**

St. Mark's Cathedral School acknowledges the high cost of education and recognizes that certain children may not have the opportunity to attend SMCS without receiving financial assistance. SMCS Financial Aid program aims to provide an opportunity for education which might otherwise be inaccessible and contributes to a socially and economically diverse student population. SMCS considers all aid applicants without regard to race, age, sex, national origin, gender, handicap, or religion.

Financial aid is offered on the basis of the financial need of qualifying parents or guardians ("Parents") of students who have been admitted to SMCS and who have registered for the upcoming term. Parents can access the financial aid application, which is processed through a third party, *FACTS*, on the school's website. Applications must be complete with supporting tax information and related documents before an aid award can be determined. Applications for financial aid must be received no later than March 15<sup>th</sup> for the following enrollment year. Exceptions may be made throughout the year as needed.

## **Temporary Enrollment**

In times of extreme circumstances, such as a natural disaster, when a student has no alternative other than attending St. Mark's for one month or less, the general admissions policies and fees may be waived but students must follow school rules and complete an emergency data form. Students will wear the uniform and have school supplies. In all other circumstances, the student must go through the standard admissions process.

## **SCHOOL UNIFORMS 2017-18**

Uniforms are required for all students PS 3-8<sup>th</sup> grade. Jewelry, makeup, and hairstyles must be appropriate.

As our PS 2 students are working on mastering toilet training, uniforms are NOT required for them. These students should wear clothing that can be easily managed by the child for toilet training purposes. For example, one piece outfits with snaps at the bottom are not appropriate. Belts on shorts or pants should not be worn.

### **Girls Grades PS 3-2**

- Plaid jumper
- Navy straight-legged pants (optional for weather below 50 degrees between the months of November through March)
- White round collar short-sleeved blouse with navy piping
- Navy or white cardigan for cool weather
- Plain navy or white turtleneck for cool weather
- Navy sweatshirt with Tower logo, navy sweatshirt with “SMCS” in school plaid, or purple sweatshirt with Lion logo for cool weather
- Socks (black, white, navy preferred; seasonal colors/patterns allowed)
- Sturdy, closed toe shoes appropriate for outdoor play (no sandals, crocs, slippers, flip flops, toms/sperries, etc.)

### **Girls Grades 3-5**

- Plaid skirt with sewn down pleats or plaid skort (skirts and skorts may not be shorter than 2” above the knee)
- Navy straight-legged pants (optional for weather below 50 degrees between the months of November through March)
- White midddy-style short-sleeved blouse
- Plaid tie
- Navy or white cardigan for cool weather
- Plain navy or white turtleneck for cool weather (worn under the blouse)
- Navy sweatshirt with Tower logo, navy sweatshirt with “SMCS” in school plaid, or purple sweatshirt with Lion logo for cool weather
- Socks (black, white, navy)
- Sturdy, closed toe shoes appropriate for outdoor play (no sandals, crocs, slippers, flip flops, Toms/Sperries, etc.)

### **Girls Grades 6-8**

- Plaid skirt with sewn down pleats or plaid skort (skirts and skorts may be no shorter than 2” above the knee)
- Navy straight-legged pants (for weather below 50 degrees between the months of November through March)
- White midddy-style short sleeved blouse
- Navy tie
- Navy or white cardigan for cool weather
- Plain navy or white turtleneck for cool weather (worn under the blouse)

- Navy sweatshirt with Tower logo, navy sweatshirt with “SMCS” in school plaid, or purple sweatshirt with Lion logo for cool weather
- Socks (black, white, navy)
- Sturdy, closed toe shoes (no sandals, crocs, slippers, flip flops, etc.)

### **Boys Grade PS 3-2**

- Navy pull-on, elastic waist shorts or pants (K3-K4)
- Navy twill shorts or pants (K-2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Black leather or navy cloth belt (1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>)
- White long or short-sleeved knit shirt with Tower logo
- Navy sweatshirt Tower logo or purple sweatshirt with Lion logo for cool weather
- Plain navy or white turtleneck for cool weather
- Socks (black, white, navy)
- Sturdy, closed toe shoes (no sandals, crocs, flip flops, etc)

### **Boys Grades 3-5**

- White oxford cloth shirts (long or short-sleeved) with Tower logo or white long or short-sleeved knit shirt with Tower logo
- Navy twill uniform shorts or pants
- Black or brown leather or plain cloth belt
- Navy sweatshirt with Tower logo or purple sweatshirt with Lion logo for cool weather
- Plain navy or white turtleneck for cool weather
- Socks (black, white, navy)
- Sturdy, closed toe shoes (no sandals, crocs, flip flops etc)

### **Boys Grades 6-8**

- Blue and white striped oxford cloth shirts (long or short-sleeved) with tower logo
- Navy twill uniform shorts or pants
- Black or brown leather or plain cloth belt
- Navy sweatshirt with Tower Logo or purple sweatshirt with Lion for cool weather
- Plain navy or white turtleneck for cool weather
- Socks (black, white, navy; logo or team associated socks are permitted)
- Sturdy, close-toed shoes (no sandals, crocs, flip flops, etc)

Boys’ shirts in grades 2-8 **must** be tucked in so that the belt is visible. Only appropriately sized white t-shirts are allowed to be worn under uniform shirts. They may not hang out of the short-sleeved shirt. Uniforms may not be stained, torn, without buttons, or too small.

### **Uniform Suppliers**

Uniforms can be purchased from our suppliers **SportsWorld**, located at 8201 Jewella Road, 686-1880, or **Shreveport Gymnastics**, 4727 Line Avenue, 869-1206. Shirts, pants, and fleeces may be purchased from **Lands’ End**, [www.landsend.com](http://www.landsend.com). Our School Code for Lands End is 9000-6404-9.

### **Monograms**

Girls in PS 3-2<sup>nd</sup> may have either a monogram or the Tower logo on the left collar of their blouse. Girls in 3<sup>rd</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> may have monograms on the left sleeve of the blouse. Boys in PS 3-5<sup>th</sup>

may have a monogram on the left sleeve of polo shirts. Boys in grades 3-8 may have a monogram on the left sleeve of their oxford cloth shirts.

### **Tights and Leggings**

White, navy, or black tights and leggings may be worn **if** the leggings are to the ankle and unadorned by lace, etc. Girls in PS 3-2<sup>nd</sup> grade may wear colored or seasonally patterned socks or tights.

### **Shoes**

Solid colored leather shoes or tennis shoes may be worn with the uniform. Low or high tops may be worn. Shoes must be laced all the way up. **Boots, sandals, clogs, backless shoes, roller shoes (Heelys), “toe shoes,” and Toms may not be worn with the uniform. Middle School girls may wear “Toms” provided they bring appropriate athletic shoes to wear for P.E. Lower School students may not change shoes for P.E.**

### **Optional Uniform Wear**

- The navy fleece with Tower Logo is available from the Land’s End catalog order department or local vendors. This jacket may be worn in the classroom.
- Middle School students may wear the school letter jacket in place of the sweatshirt. These jackets are available from Shreveport Gymnastics.
- Boys who play on the Jets football team may wear their Jets sweatshirts during cool weather.
- Girls on the cheerleading squad may wear their cheerleading jackets in school.
- School team over-shirts, designed and sold by the school, may be worn when seasonally appropriate.

A coat of choice may be worn to school, but it must be removed on entering the building. In the school only the approved fleece, sweatshirts, sweaters, cheerleading jacket or St. Mark’s/Jets jacket may be worn.

On days when children have Brownie or Cub Scout meetings, they may wear their scout uniforms.

In Middle School, a detention will be given to a student who receives five uniform violations in a semester.

### **Physical Education**

Students in grades 6-8 are required to wear P.E. uniforms. The P.E. uniforms are available from SportsWorld and Shreveport Gymnastics and consist of black shorts and purple t-shirts with the Lion Logo.

### **Casual Dress/Jeans Days**

On special occasions the Head of School may declare a Casual Dress/Jeans Day. Students are expected to be neat—no torn t-shirts or ragged clothing. Shorts and jeans are permitted for both boys and girls. Shorts may be no shorter than 2” above the knee. T-shirts are permitted as long as the design/language is appropriate for St. Mark’s Cathedral School, but tank tops, spaghetti strap, and sleeveless shirts are not allowed. Shirts may be worn tucked in or left out, but the shirt must be long enough to cover the midriff area when a student’s arms are raised. Shoes must still have closed toes and backs and be appropriate for P.E. classes, and only uniform jackets may be

worn in the classroom. On some occasions there may be a special theme for the casual dress day, such as school spirit, Mardi Gras, Christmas, etc. Guidelines for the theme will be issued. Any student whose casual clothing does not adhere to the general guidelines or the assigned theme will be required to change into a school uniform.

**Hair**

All students should have naturally occurring hair color, and hair should be kept out of the eyes. Boys are asked to keep their hair cut above the eyebrows and above the collar in back.

# THE SCHOOL DAY, HEALTH, AND SAFETY

## School Hours

The hours for the school day are

PS 2-4	8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
K	8:00 AM – 1:30 or 3:00 PM
1 <sup>st</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 AM – 3:00 PM

Students should avoid being late. Students not in their desks and ready to begin class at 8:00 AM (K-8<sup>th</sup>) will be marked tardy. Those arriving after 8:00 AM (K-8<sup>th</sup>) should sign in at the school office. Records of tardies are kept and parents whose students have excessive tardies will receive a letter at the end of the quarter.

Extended hours are offered through the After School at St. Mark's (ASM) program. Participation in ASM requires additional fees. Parents should contact the Business Office for information. Please insure that students are picked up promptly after school or ASM.

Students leaving early must be picked up and signed out from the school office by the parent. Those returning to school the same day need to sign in with the White House staff or school secretary.

## Arrival and Dismissal/Departure of Students

***No cell phones are to be used for any purposes in the designated "No Phone Zones" of each carpool line. Children cannot be loaded into cars while parents are using their cell phones. This is essential for your children's safety and is a requirement of our accrediting organization, the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools. Your cooperation is appreciated.***

### Carpools

St. Mark's operates two carpool lines, one on Fairfield Avenue and one on Thornhill, referred to as "Front" and "Back Carpool" respectively.

- Students in grades 5-8 who do not have a younger sibling must use Thornhill (back carpool).
- Students in PS 2-K (Little School) must use Fairfield (front carpool).
- Older siblings of Little School children must come to front carpool, or parents may pick up the younger child at front carpool and then proceed to back carpool for the older child(ren).
- 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade children may use either carpool line as preferred by their parents, but they need to use the same carpool line consistently.

### Arrival Rules

1. Students should arrive at school no earlier than 7:30 AM and no later than 8:00 AM.
2. Those arriving before 7:45 AM must go directly to their assigned area to wait until the duty teacher dismisses them to classrooms at 7:45 AM.

3. Parents may choose to drop off their children at the Fairfield Avenue door or the back door on Thornhill under the breezeway between the Ministry Center and Parish Hall.
4. Parents who wish to park and walk children in must escort their children across the carpool line to insure their safety.
5. The Business Office door of the Cathedral is not to be used as a drop off point at any time.

### **General Dismissal Rules**

1. All dismissal rules are part of school policy and **must** be followed by all concerned. They are designed for the safety and well being of the students.
2. Please be on time and stay in your car so that we may move the line as quickly as possible.
3. DISMISSAL/DEPARTURE WILL ONLY BE FROM THORNHILL OR FAIRFIELD.
4. Students may not change carpool or other dismissal arrangements without permission from their parents to their teachers or the school secretary; a note or email in the morning is the preferred method of making this change. Please contact the office by 2:00 with any pick-up changes. After 2:30, it may not be possible to get the message to the student and his or her teacher before dismissal.
5. Any student staying for athletic practice should meet with teammates and coach at a pre-arranged place.
6. ASM students should report to the Parish Hall as soon as possible.
7. Students must be picked up by 12:10 (PS), 1:40 (PS ASM, K), or 3:20 (PS ASM and K-8<sup>th</sup>), or 4:30 (ASM) or 5:30 (ASM). Students who have not been picked up by these times will be charged a \$25 late fee.
8. Students who have not been picked up by 3:20 will be sent to ASM.
9. ASM Pick up for K-8<sup>th</sup> and for PS at 5:30 is in the back parking lot off of Thornhill Dr.

### **Rules for Dismissal on Fairfield Avenue (12:00 PS, 1:30 PS/K, and 3:00 PS-8<sup>th</sup>)**

1. USE YOUR CARTAG AT ALL TIMES!
2. Please be on time and stay in your car so that we may move the line quickly as possible.
3. 3:00 only: In order to limit the extent to which the carpool backs up traffic on Fairfield, carpool enters and circles through the Cathedral parking lot, then goes back onto Fairfield and into the school parking lot. Parents who are south-bound on Fairfield should never try to turn left “into” the line of cars which has already circled through the Cathedral lot.
4. Students will sit or stand in their designated area and remain there until their car arrives.
5. If your child is not at carpool, you will be asked to park, and the child will be brought to you.
6. Parents who have parked and need to cross the carpool line should only do so at the designated crosswalk and with the permission of the carpool faculty.

### **Rules for Carpool Dismissal on Thornhill Avenue**

1. USE YOUR CARTAG AT ALL TIMES!
2. Please be on time and stay in your car so that we may move the line quickly as possible.



3. Students will sit in their carpool groups close to the exit door of the gym for carpool.
4. Students will only be dismissed from the Thornhill gym door exit.
5. Parents will line up on the WEST side of Thornhill Avenue only. (This is the side of the street closest to the school.) Please do not block driveways.
6. In case of rain, students are to exit from the Parish Hall under the covered driveway between the gym and the Parish Hall.

## **Absences from School and Make-up Work**

St. Mark's Cathedral School is required by the State of Louisiana to enforce school attendance regulations. Any absence which is not excused by a physician/dentist for medical reasons must be considered unexcused. Students may not have more than 16 unexcused absences per year.

We take our legal obligation seriously and expect parents to do so as well. Any non-medical absence that is proposed in school time should first be discussed with the child's teacher to determine the academic implications.

Any time a student is not in school, the parent should call the school office by 8:30 to confirm the absence.

When a student is absent, parents should check the teacher's weekly handout or homework web page to find out assignments. Middle School students are assigned to be "Study Buddies" for each other to assist when students are absent for more than one day. Homework is available online, but the Study Buddy will deliver necessary books/binders/handouts to the office by 3:00. Students are responsible for any work missed during their absence and should check with their study buddies and teachers to make up the work. Students will normally have the number of days missed in order to make up the work.

## **Family Trips**

Parents are encouraged to use school vacations for travel in order to limit the need to remove children from school. When families must travel during school, teachers should be informed in advance. When possible, teachers will give assignments to work on while students are away, but it is not always possible to provide all work in advance. While efforts will be made to allow adequate time for make-up, the burden for such work is on the student and parents. Teachers will work with students during or after class as time allows, but they cannot fully reteach missed material. Classroom discussion and activities are a vital part of the learning process and cannot be replicated; parents must understand that they not only must make up homework but will usually need to spend additional time helping students understand the material.

## **Appointments during the School Day**

A message must be sent to the teacher if a student is to leave during school hours for any reason. The student will be dismissed **from the office** and must be signed out by a parent/guardian. If the student returns the same day, parents need to sign their child back in to the school office. Parents come to the office to meet their child.

## **Student Phone Calls**

Use of the school office telephone is restricted. It should only be used with specific permission from the classroom teacher and school secretary for urgent business. Students are not to use the Library phone at any time.

## **Visitors to Campus**

Visitor badges are required for identification purposes for all visitors on the campus. Please check in to the office upon arriving at school

The student who wishes to bring a visitor to school must receive permission from the Head of School and the teachers involved the day before the visit. The guest, if attending classes, is expected to adhere to the same behavior standards as SMCS students. Excessive visiting is not permitted. Student visitors do not wear visitor badges.

## **Lunch Program**

Students may bring their lunches from home each day, including a drink, or may order a lunch from the school lunch program. Milk may be obtained for an annual fee; water is available for all.

Lunch orders are placed through an online service. Parents will fill out what the student wishes to purchase on each given day. Lunch orders must be pre-paid before the lunches can be ordered. Details are sent home in advance so that children may purchase these lunches when available, if they wish to do so.

A limited number of microwave ovens are available for Lower and Middle School use. Do not send food to be heated if your child does not know how to use a microwave oven. Teachers should not be expected to heat your child's lunch. Preschool students are not allowed to bring food which must be heated in microwave ovens.

If your student forgot a lunch, he or she may call and ask you to bring one. The Office Staff cannot deliver lunches to classrooms nor will announcements be made over the intercom; parents will be asked to deliver the lunch, or students may simply come to the office to collect them. Please do not make bringing "fast food" lunches an everyday occurrence and remember that students are not allowed to drink soft drinks during the school day.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are an integral part of a student's studies at St. Mark's Cathedral School. Parents are asked to sign a general permission slip at the beginning of the year allowing their children to take part in these field trips.

When a particular trip is planned, parents will be notified in advance of the date and time, transportation arrangements, costs (if any), and chaperons. Precautions are taken for the safety of the children.

It is important that parents understand when they go on school field trips that they do as chaperones, not as guests. Parents should assist the teachers in supervising the students and should follow all the directions of the supervising teachers. Alcohol and tobacco/nicotine use are prohibited while participating on school-sponsored trips.

If parents are participating as drivers, it is imperative that they take students directly to and from the destination. All drivers should caravan together so that in the event of an accident there will be others present to assist. The school needs copies of the driver's license and insurance card of all parents who drive school trips. Siblings are not allowed on field trips. Chaperones must be able to assist the teacher in supervising the children on the trip.

The school will require that parents follow the laws of the State of Louisiana with regard to child safety seats. Children who weigh less than forty pounds must sit in a child safety seat; children who weigh between forty and sixty pounds must sit in a booster seat. Parents must provide the appropriate form of safety seat in order for the child to go on the field trip.

Lower School students may not sit in the front seat on field trips.

Students in Lower School generally go on one-day field trips. Beginning in 5<sup>th</sup> grade students go on overnight trips. Parents are asked to assist as chaperones on some overnight trips. The parents are responsible for the cost of the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade overnight trips.

## **Immunization and Medical Exclusion**

The State of Louisiana requires immunization of all students in public and private schools and requires that schools maintain immunization records to demonstrate compliance with the law. Exceptions are allowed if the parents submit a written statement of objection to immunization or the student's physician submits a statement that immunization is contraindicated for medical reasons. The school checks immunization records annually and will notify parents whose children's immunizations are not current.

The relevant statute also provides that in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, the school may exclude from attendance those students who are not immunized until such time as it is safe for the non-immunized children to return to school.

## **Sickness and Injury**

Please do not send children to school who are obviously sick and could be contagious. Children who have been home sick must be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. If a child becomes sick at school, he or she will be sent to the office. If the student has a fever or is throwing up, the parents will be contacted and asked to pick up the student. In other cases the parents will be given the option of picking up their child or having him or her returned to class.

Playground and P.E. mishaps are part and parcel of school life. In the event of minor injury, a child will be sent to the office for an ice pack, Band-Aid, etc. If the injury appears to require possible treatment or if the child is extremely distressed, the parents will be called and asked what they want to do. In the event of a serious injury which clearly needs immediate medical attention, parents will be called at once; if the injury appears life-threatening or seems to require immediate treatment and parents cannot be contacted, the school will call 911 for an ambulance.

## Medication

**Absolutely no medication (including epi-pens for allergic reactions)** will be administered at or by the school without **written permission/instructions from the student's physician**. Those physicians' forms are available in the school office. Any medication must be brought to the school office and will be administered under the supervision of the office staff. All medication **must be** labeled with the student's name and the dosage to be taken. Please pick up the medicine after your child is well. Students **may not** carry medication with them at school except with the approval of the Head of School in special circumstances (e.g. insulin for diabetic students).

## Allergies and Chronic Medical Conditions

All parents are asked to inform the school of any allergies or chronic medical conditions on the medical information form in RenWeb at the beginning of the year. The School Nurse, homeroom teachers or division heads will generally contact parents for more information about the allergies or condition and will create a treatment/management plan if necessary. If emergency medication (such as an epi-pen) needs to be kept at school, the school generally requires one for the homeroom teacher and one for the office. All requirements regarding medications indicated in the section above must be followed.

## Food Allergies

Many students suffer from a variety of food allergies. Please be especially sure to let the school know of food allergies. The School will review all emergency data sheets and will make a Master Allergy List for teachers and post as appropriate. Food allergy information will be communicated to parents of the other children in the class as appropriate. If you have been informed of a food allergy in your child's class, please be especially mindful of that need when preparing any kind of food to send for the whole class. Never insist that another parent's child eat or even take any food for any reason; a child may have instructions not to eat any food which has not been prepared or specifically approved by his or her parents.

Because peanut and tree nut allergies are particularly prevalent and create possibilities of cross-contamination, the school has taken extra measures to protect students' health. Since the school and Cathedral share facilities and many different groups use the Cathedral campus, it is not possible to make the full campus peanut-free. Every reasonable effort is made to protect students with food allergies and to prevent cross-contamination, but it is important for students and families to have made appropriate plans in case of allergic reactions. The following protocols have been adopted to protect our children with peanut/tree nut allergies.

- The school maintains a "peanut-free" table in the lunchroom where students with peanut/tree nut allergies may sit if their parents desire, but students with peanut allergies are responsible for sitting there; the preschool also maintains a peanut-free table, and teachers will make sure students with peanut allergies sit there if we are aware of the allergies.
- Classroom teachers may establish "peanut only" spaces in their room or on the playground for use by students with snacks that may have peanuts/tree nuts.

- No baked goods with peanut or tree nut ingredients should come to school as classroom treats or bake sale items; this includes baked good and treats for parties and classroom celebrations.
- Many processed foods and baked goods may come from facilities where there is a possibility of trace exposure to peanuts/tree nuts. The risks such items pose vary greatly with individual children. Please consult with your teacher or the division head before bringing treats to school in order to determine whether products with trace exposure can be brought to a classroom. The school maintains a list of items which are safe for students with peanut/tree nut allergies so that you may bring in alternate treats.
- The School will always have a supply of special peanut/tree nut-free items for students to have if you bring a treat which some children cannot have.

## Lice

Head lice are an unpleasant but not uncommon experience for young children. In order to prevent or eradicate them, communication between home and school is essential. Parents are requested to inform the school immediately if they detect lice on their children. Such children should receive treatment before returning to school. Parents of other children in that grade or division of the school will be informed of the outbreak, but not of the identity of any persons with lice. If the school becomes aware of an outbreak of lice, it may be necessary to examine all children in a grade or division. In keeping with the recommendations of the Center for Disease Control, students will be allowed to remain at school for the day, but the parents will be informed that they must receive treatment before returning to school. The school will make every effort to keep parents appropriately informed and to take any necessary steps with regard to cleaning carpets, etc.

## Extreme Weather Conditions

In the event of extreme weather warnings on radio and TV, parents may come to the school to take their children home. Be sure to check with the office if you pick up your child under these circumstances. St. Mark's Cathedral School will make its own determinations for weather-related school closings, independent of local parish school boards, although we will generally take public school closings into account. In some circumstances, we will follow the public schools in closing but may re-open even while the public schools remain closed. In such an event, parents should certainly keep their children home if driving conditions from their home to school remain unsafe.

**Parents will be notified by text and email of all closings or other pertinent weather-related information; this is the primary means of such communication, although TV/radio may be used as well.**

## COMMUNITY LIFE AND COMMUNICATION

### Problems or Concerns

The faculty and staff are committed to serving the children and parents of the school as professionally as possible. Anytime a parent has concerns of any sort it is best to go immediately to the source, usually the classroom teacher. Please do not assume that teachers are aware of the problem or concern and are failing to address it; sometimes we may not be aware of situations that we need to know about. Sometimes we may be addressing a problem or concern and you may not be aware of that. If you have spoken with a teacher and do not feel the situation has been adequately handled, you should contact the Division Head and then the Head of School.

### Grievance Policy

In the event of a disagreement between a student/parent and a faculty or staff member, the matter shall be processed in the following manner:

1. The two parties in question shall discuss the problem and seek a resolution between themselves.
2. If unresolved to the parties' satisfaction, the problem shall be presented informally to the appropriate Division Head for resolution.
3. If this step does not result in a satisfactory resolution, the Head of School shall be brought in by the Division Head to hear all sides of the issue and render a decision in writing.

Should the problem remain unresolved satisfactorily after all these steps have been taken, the student/parent or faculty member may submit a written request for a review of the Head of School's written decision within three days of the decision to the Executive Committee of the St. Mark's Cathedral School Board to insure that the Head of School has followed "due process" and not to reconsider the Head of School's decision. "Due process" is meant to indicate following the procedures, policies, and principles of St. Mark's Cathedral School; it is not meant to meet the definition of "due process" as applied in a court of law.

### Expectations of Parents

Just as St. Mark's Cathedral School expects faculty and staff to conduct themselves professionally and to model developmentally appropriate nurturing behavior, we expect parents to respect the policies and procedures of the school and to interact with all members of the community in a supportive and appropriate manner. These mutual expectations are spelled out in more detail in the School-Parent Covenant. Please remember that you represent the school just as much as teachers or students. Whether interacting with a teacher, chaperoning a field trip, or cheering on a team at a game, parents should strive to be polite and respectful. Remember that teachers are not allowed to discuss other parents' children and that discussions of individual students should happen in private, not in the halls or classroom. It is best to call or email a teacher first about a concern rather than to show up unannounced, and parents should remember that teachers may need time to gather information or prepare a response to parental communications.

It is natural that there may be a time when parents are dissatisfied with some aspect of the school. In such situations, however, parents are requested to address those concerns through the appropriate channels rather than with other people in social situations or through social media.

In signing the Enrollment Contract, parents agree to accept the rules and regulations of the school and to support and abide by school policies. Failure to do so could be grounds for termination of the contract or non-renewal for the following year.

**Chapel**

As an Episcopal school and a ministry of St. Mark’s Cathedral, an important part of the school’s mission is fostering spiritual development. Accordingly, all students at St. Mark’s Cathedral School attend Chapel at least once per week. These weekly services allow us to meet together as a community and focus on the spiritual dimension of our human experience. Our goal at each service is to provide an environment for prayer, worship, and spiritual growth, not only for the children, but also for faculty and staff. On those days when students do not have Chapel, the day begins with the Pledge of Allegiance and School Prayer.

Chapel is held in the Cathedral for grades K-8 according to the schedule below. Friday is designated as “Family Chapel” and parents are especially encouraged to attend on that day, but parents are always welcome to attend all chapel services and sit with their children. On those occasions where each class processes into the cathedral behind the banner signifying their patron saint, parents are asked to wait for their child in the pew assigned to his/her class.

Monday	Grades 2-5	Cathedral	8:00
Tuesday	Grades 6-8	Cathedral	8:00
Wednesday	PS 4	PS Chapel	8:15
	PS 3	PS Chapel	8:30
	PS 2	Classroom	9:00
Thursday	Grades K-1	Chapel	8:15
Friday	Grades 2-8	Cathedral	8:00

*First Grade will switch to Lower School Chapel in the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and will begin regularly attending Family Chapel in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester.*

In keeping with the customs of Episcopal worship, students play a role in leading and assisting worship. Students may serve as banner carriers, acolytes, or readers. In general, these roles are taken by students in grades 4-8 and are assigned by the School. Students involved in morning chapel services should arrive to begin their duties at 7:40 AM.

Several times per year to mark important Feast Days in the life of the Church, students in 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades participate in the Holy Eucharist, also known as Holy Communion. Instructions are given as to how to receive communion. Students who have been baptized and receive communion in their own churches are welcome to receive communion at St. Mark’s. Parents should discuss with their children whether the children should or should not receive. Additional information about worship in the Episcopal Church is found at the end of this handbook.

## **School Parties**

Parties are held at Christmas, Valentine's Day, and the End of the Year for students in grades K-8. The room mothers and the teachers will organize these events. In order to teach children good nutritional habits, we normally try to limit sweet and sugary snacks and balance them with other choices that include proteins, complex carbohydrates, and fruits and vegetables. Please follow the teacher and room mother's guidelines with regard to this. At times special classroom events may be planned by the teachers to coordinate with the curriculum; the teacher may ask room mothers for assistance, but no parent should plan class activities without approval of the teacher. No swimming parties may be held during school time without the express approval of the Head of School.

## **Birthdays**

When a child has a birthday, a parent may wish to provide a snack or lunch dessert. Arrangements must be made in advance with the homeroom teacher. Please keep the snacks simple and easy to manage to minimize mess and preparation time and follow all guidelines with regard to peanuts/tree nuts.

## **Off-Campus Parties**

Love and consideration are two of the basic teachings at St. Mark's Cathedral School. Naturally, it is often impossible to invite all of a child's classmates to a private party. Your consideration is asked of those friends from school who may not be included. Invitations may be distributed at school **IF AND ONLY IF** all members of the grade/classroom or if all girls/boys from the grade/classroom are included.

## **Presents**

In the event that students are giving presents for Christmas, Valentines, end of the year, etc., all students in the class or all boys/girls in the class must receive a present. **It is not necessary to give presents on all such occasions.** If such presents are given, they should be inexpensive and simple; please remember that not all families can afford to give expensive gifts to all children, but children don't always understand why they cannot reciprocate.

## **Church Property**

St. Mark's Cathedral is very generous with its permission to use its facilities. There are, however, some areas restricted from school use. Students are not allowed in the church wing on the second floor (the church parlor and offices). The main entrance by the church receptionist's desk and all phones on this floor are off limits. The purchase of soft drinks from the church vending machines is prohibited during the school day. All maintenance areas, control boxes, etc. are also off limits to students.

## **Change of Address and Emergency Contact Information**

Parents of all enrolled students enter and approve their student and family's personal information via the RenWeb ParentsWeb portal. This includes address, phone, email, and employer



information, as well as emergency contacts and medical information. It is the parents' responsibility to keep all information current. If there is an address change – physical or email, or any changes in emergency contacts, parents **MUST** update this information in the ParentsWeb portal. Parents are welcome to call the school for assistance with the RenWeb system.

## **Communication with Teachers**

Strong parent-teacher bonds and healthy communication between home and school are vital to a child's education. St. Mark's teachers are expected to communicate with parents in helpful and appropriate ways, and such communication is expected to be timely, respectful, and professional. We ask that parents conduct themselves similarly.

Please contact your child's homeroom teacher or the appropriate administrator any time there is information we should have about your child. In order to facilitate more comprehensive conversations and because electronic communication often lacks emotional cues, the school encourages the use of face-to-face or telephone conversations for discussions of academic or behavioral concerns. Teacher contact phone numbers are therefore provided to parents at the start of the year. We do ask that you remember that teachers have family and private lives as well; it is not appropriate to call teachers after 8:30 p.m., and weekend calls are strongly discouraged.

The school strives to communicate as much as possible through email for conveying information about activities and programs. It is therefore imperative that we have an email address for all parents. Individual teachers often contact parents about important but non-emergency information through email. The school uses an email blast system to send emails to all parents or large groups of parents simultaneously. This system also allows for sending all-school phone calls or texts as necessary.

Texting with teachers is discouraged. Teachers are not supposed to use their cell phones during instructional time, and many turn them off or silence them when students are in the room. If the teacher has indicated that he or she prefers texting for communication of brief information (e.g. change in carpool arrangements, scheduling time to talk) texting is acceptable. Texting is not an appropriate medium for discussions of student performance or behavior or for complex information. Such information needs to be shared via email or telephone calls. Texts made late in the evening or over weekends will not be returned until convenient for the teacher.

Despite the widespread use and obvious benefits of social media, such media are not appropriate formats for discussion of students. Please use email or call the teacher directly.

## **Financial Arrangements**

Full details of the financial obligations of parents are contained in the Enrollment Contract and Admission letters, which state the policies of the school in this area. Accounts from the previous school year **must** be current **before** a student will be admitted for the fall semester of the following year. Records will not be sent to another school if there is an outstanding financial balance.

## **Scheduling**

A master calendar is maintained in the office. Please check before scheduling any special event. In the event of a conflict, the Head of School will make the final decision after consultation with concerned persons. Any event taking place outside of the main school classrooms, or outside of the school day, needs the approval of the Cathedral calendar coordinator.

## **Parental Use of Social Media**

Widespread use of social media is now the norm for parents. Parents are asked to remember, however, that the best way for the school to address a problem is for you to communicate directly with the appropriate teacher or administrator. Posting complaints or concerns on social media will not help address the problem. Negative comments about members of the school community are disruptive and altogether inappropriate. Teachers with social media accounts may choose whether or not they wish to be “friends” with parents.

The school maintains Facebook and Instagram pages which frequently provide updates on school activities or depicts events on campus. We encourage parents to “like” our pages. It is the school’s practice not to identify children with last names on social media.

Please keep in mind that many parents do not wish their children to be identified online. Parents are encouraged to identify children only by first names. Before “tagging” pictures, parents should make sure that such practice is welcome. Likewise, parents who prefer not to have their children tagged or otherwise identified should communicate that with their fellow parents.

## **Communicating in Cases of Divorce, Separation or Unmarried Parents**

Believing that a child's educational experience is enhanced through active parental participation and partnership, St. Mark’s Cathedral School seeks to facilitate communication with all parents, step-parents and custodial parties in cases of divorce, separation or unmarried parents. Absent a court order to the contrary, and regardless of who signs the enrollment contract or pays the tuition, it is the policy of the school to provide all parents and custodial parties (custodial, non-custodial, and step-parents) equal access to all official records and reports regarding child(ren) to whom they are a parent, step-parent or custodial party. All parents, step-parents and custodial parties are entitled to receive normal school mailings (e.g., grades and comments, all-school emails). And each parent, step-parent or custodial party is granted access to the child(ren), to teachers, and to administrators. Such access is provided without notification of other parties. It is the parents', step-parents' or custodial party's responsibility to provide record of court decisions, and up-to-date contact information. Given the unique legal situation of each family, the school may make exceptions to this policy (e.g., to comply with a court order).

## **Testifying in Divorce or Custody Proceedings**

Because St. Mark’s Cathedral School strives to remain neutral in any parental dispute, including litigation between parties to a divorce or custody disagreement, absent a subpoena properly issued by a court of law, no school employees may serve as witnesses in any civil or domestic proceeding involving a parent of a child enrolled at the school.

# THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY

## The Curriculum

The curriculum at St. Mark's is one that is challenging and comprehensive. It helps students to understand their cultural roots, to use language with confidence and ability, to explore the wonders of math and science, to grow into caring members of our society, and to develop their relationship with God. In the words of the prayer for those who have just been baptized, we pray that our students will have inquiring and discerning hearts, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love God, and the gift of joy and wonder in all His works (BCP p. 308). Every part of our school is committed to fulfilling those goals.

In order to fulfill our curricular goals, our school program and faculty are organized into the following three areas:

Preschool	PS 2, PS 3, PS 4, Kindergarten
Lower School	1 <sup>st</sup> —5 <sup>th</sup>
Middle School	6 <sup>th</sup> —8 <sup>th</sup>

Teachers in the Enrichment, Foreign Language, and Physical Education departments support homeroom teachers. In addition to the core curriculum of English and Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies, PS 3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students also have Spanish, and 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> grade students choose either French or Spanish. All students in grades 1-5 have daily Physical Education and weekly classes in Art, Music, Christian Education, Computer, and Library Skills. A dedicated Lower School Science Lab allows Lower School students to go to science lab weekly. Additional enrichment classes are offered to the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Preschool students enjoy developmentally appropriate offerings in art, music, movement, science, and Christian education.

## Grades and Testing

The purpose of grades is to communicate to students and their parents the academic progress that is being made. The school gives regular assignments, homework, projects, and class work that the student needs to fulfill. These assignments, along with tests and quizzes, are averaged to assign a grade at the end of the quarter. Middle School students take final exams, and those exams are factored into their semester grade. Exams count more and become more comprehensive as students get older, in order to prepare them for high school exams.

In addition, the school administers standardized testing in the spring to 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. These tests enable students and parents to see how the work done at St. Mark's compares with the same grades in public and independent schools across the country. Eighth graders will take state-mandated exams as necessary and determined by the state and parish.

## Grading Scale

<u>Letter</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Description</u>
<b>A</b>	<b>100-93</b>	<b>Superior</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>92-85</b>	<b>Above Average</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>84-74</b>	<b>Average</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>73-66</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>below 66</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory</b>

*Note: Although a D is considered a passing grade, it does not indicate that a student is prepared for the next level in that subject. The division director will normally make suggestions or requirements for summer remediation.*

## Grade Reporting

Report Cards are issued at the end of each quarter. At some grade levels, students are evaluated not only on skills but also on conduct. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers for more specific information about their child's progress.

In addition to report cards, each week a packet of papers from the week preceding is sent home with the child in grades 1<sup>st</sup>–5<sup>th</sup>. Tests, quizzes, classroom assignments, and graded homework assignments are included. Lower School students receive progress reports in the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> week of the quarter. Middle School students who have a grade of C- or lower at the mid-point of the quarter receive Notices of Concern.

St. Mark's allows parents and middle school students electronic access to their child's grades through a portal on the school website to RenWeb. This allows parents to see assignments when they are made and grades as they are posted. Keep in mind that grading and posting assignments takes time, so parents should allow at least 48 hours after the completion of a test or project before expecting to see a grade.

## Academic Deficiencies and Promotion

Since the work for each grade builds upon that accomplished in the previous one, a student may not be promoted to the next grade level nor graduate from the school if he/she has a year-end grade of **F** in any major academic subject; in such instances the Division Director and Head of School will meet with the parents and establish a Remediation Plan which may require repeating the grade, summer coursework or tutoring in order to demonstrate a passing grade, or seeking a more appropriate academic setting with the school's assistance. In Lower School, the major academic subject areas are Reading, Language, and Math. In Middle School, the major academic subject areas are English, Math, Science, Social Studies and Foreign Language.

If a student earns a D either for the year or in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> quarters, the division director will determine whether that grade precludes likely success in the next year. In such cases the division director will meet with the parents to establish a Summer Remediation Plan. Successful completion of this plan will be required to return to St. Mark's Cathedral School.

In the preschool and kindergarten, promotion is based upon readiness as assessed by the teacher and division director. It is sometimes in children's best interest to take an extra year in preschool

or Kindergarten. This decision has nothing to do with a child's long-term academic ability but is a function of intellectual, emotional, physical, and social development, each of which is important. When a child takes an extra year of preschool or kindergarten, it should be considered a "gift of time."

## **Conferences with Teachers and the Head of School**

Education is a partnership between home and school. We desire a close working relationship between parents and teachers. Parent-teacher conferences are an essential element in this. There is one conference day during the first quarter and one at the end of the school year for Lower and Middle School Students. Preschool and K-5 parents have conferences in November and at the end of the year.

In addition to regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences, either a teacher or a parent may request a conference at a mutually convenient time. The Head of School is happy to schedule conferences with parents on any matter, after the matter has been discussed first with the teacher and Division Directors.

In January, homeroom teachers will contact parents to inquire whether there are any particular academic or social concerns and whether a conference would be helpful.

## **Classwork and Homework**

Homework plays an integral part in enriching work done in class and in developing good study skills and self-discipline. Students will need a quiet place to study at home. Parents generally assist by calling out spelling words, listening to their children read and insuring that the homework is being completed. Students need to learn to complete assignments alone in order to build self-esteem and to learn self-discipline. Since students work at different speeds, the following are only guidelines, based on what an average student could reasonably accomplish:

Grade 1: 15-20 minutes per night; reading on weekends

Grade 2: 20-30 minutes per night; reading on weekends

Grade 3: 30-45 minutes per night; rarely on weekends, reading on weekends

Grade 4: 45-50 minutes per night; rarely on weekends; reading on weekends

Grade 5: 50-75 minutes per night; rarely on weekends; reading on weekends

Grade 6: 60-90 minutes per night; weekends usually; reading on weekends

Grade 7: 75-90 minutes per night; weekends usually; reading on weekends

Grade 8: 90-120 minutes per night; weekends usually; reading on weekends

In grades 5-8 especially, long-term assignments are given, and it is important that students learn to budget their time well and to plan ahead. The faculty works with the students to help them with this. Parents need to check that students are not leaving too much work for one night and to encourage them in their progress.

Students also need help in finding a balance between the need for speed and efficiency in getting work accomplished and the natural desire for excellence and attention to detail. All of us must deal with the constraints of time in working on our projects, and our children are no exception.

The **Accelerated Reader Program** is intended to help teachers and students keep track of outside reading. Students can test either in a classroom or in the library. The exact requirements vary from grade to grade as determined by teachers. Teachers may require a certain number of points or that a set number of books be read during the nine weeks. A grade based on the number of books read in each grading period may be taken.

## **Tutoring**

There are times when students need some extra instruction over and above that which the regular schedule can provide. Sometimes extra help may be available to students during the school day for a few minutes. When either teacher or parents think more help is needed, they should discuss the need and what sort of tutoring might be appropriate. Many teachers will tutor after school for a fee. Teachers may not tutor students for compensation if the student is in their class for the current year unless they have special permission from the Head of School.

## **Section 504 and School Building Level Committee**

St. Mark's Cathedral School makes reasonable accommodations for students with special needs in accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Code. The School Building Level Committee is chaired by the Directors of each school division, according to the age of the student. The SBLC's goal is to assist students to remain in and profit from the regular classroom education program at St. Mark's. At the request of a parent or teacher, the SBLC meets with the parents of a student to determine if there is need for screening for vision, hearing, speech and language, medical or motor skills impairments. Once the appropriate assessment has taken place, the SBLC will meet with the parents and teachers to establish suitable classroom interventions and/or curriculum modifications for the student for that year with the Committee's goal in mind, to assist a student to profit from the regular classroom education program.

Non-public institutions may by right select their students and are not obligated to educate all types of students who may enroll. If SMCS is unable to serve a student appropriately under 504 guidelines and cannot make the appropriate modifications and accommodations, the Head of School will advise the parents of this situation, will assist parents in finding an alternative placement, and will refund the appropriate balance of tuition costs. At St. Mark's, we will attempt to make all appropriate modifications and accommodations.

Students with identified 504 plans must follow the St. Mark's Cathedral School discipline policy.

## **Awards and Scholarships**

St. Mark's Cathedral School participates in the State of Louisiana Student of the Year Program. Students in grades 5 and 8 (one per grade) are selected by the faculty in accordance with criteria established by the state. Students must then complete and submit a portfolio to participate in the program.

Beginning with the fifth grade, two academic awards are given at the end of each quarter. Students are recognized for their achievement at a Divisional Chapel Service. Certificates of Achievement are given to those on the **Head of School's Honor Roll** (all A's) and to those on the **Honor Roll** (A's and B's). Middle School homeroom teachers also nominate students to be

Student of the Quarter based upon effort, participation, and interaction with both teachers and students.

The **Middle School Academic Awards** are given by subject matter and grade level in English, Social Studies, Science, Math, French, Spanish, and in enrichment classes. The teacher of each of these subject areas is responsible for establishing his/her own criteria and for selecting the recipients of his/her award. In addition, there are four **Endowed Scholarships**, which are awarded upon the recommendation of the faculty, based upon the specific criteria for each award. These awards are

**David C. Tyrrell Scholarship** for a rising 6<sup>th</sup> grader  
**Polly Couch Slack Scholarship** for a rising 7<sup>th</sup> grader  
**Phoebe Judd Tooke Scholarship** for a rising 8<sup>th</sup> grader  
**M. L. Agnew Award** for a rising 8<sup>th</sup> grader

The **Dean's Award**, the most prestigious award at St. Mark's Cathedral School, is awarded to a graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade student who has attended 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades at St. Mark's and, throughout his or her time at our school, has consistently embodied the values of the school through commitment to the highest standards of personal integrity, consistent academic effort, and concern for others. The Dean of the Cathedral presents the award upon the recommendation of the faculty.

The **Head of School's Award** is awarded to a graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade student who has the highest academic average for work done in grades 6-8 at the end of his or her St. Mark's career.

## **Graduation**

This ceremony is the culmination of many years of growth and achievement for our 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Since graduation is such a significant event, it is important that the school community support its graduates. For this reason, all students and parents are encouraged to attend. The dress code for the graduating boys is **white shirts, khaki slacks, solid navy sport coats, and a school tie**. The dress code for the graduating girls is **white tea-length or full-length dresses and white or silver shoes**. The dress should be age-appropriate and appropriate for a church service; sleeves are preferable, straps acceptable. Strapless and spaghetti strap dresses are not appropriate. Parents should contact the Middle School Director if they have questions about the Middle School Dress Code.

Graduation takes place in the Cathedral and is followed by a reception in the Ministry Center hosted by the 7<sup>th</sup> grade parents. The Dean's Award and Head of School's Award are presented at Graduation. The Middle School Faculty chooses a male and a female speaker for Graduation. Academic standing, character, social relations with peers, and public speaking ability are all factors in this decision.

## **STUDENT LIFE AND DISCIPLINE**

### **Purpose**

The foundation of student life at St. Mark's is the development of self-confidence, responsibility, and self-discipline. Students should know that they are valued and are both physically and emotionally safe at school. They should have a sense of responsibility for themselves and respect for other members of the school community. The rules and consequences outlined below are intended to help our students grow into responsible and caring citizens who will contribute positively to their communities.

### **Honesty Policy**

St. Mark's Cathedral School expects all students to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity. We know that learning to be honest is not always easy and that students will sometimes make poor choices. We want them to learn from their choices in order to grow into adults of good character. When students violate our rules and norms that have to do with honesty and integrity, in addition to whatever appropriate consequence is assigned, teachers and administrators will discuss the importance of making honesty central to one's character.

### **School Discipline**

The teacher is primarily responsible for discipline within his or her classroom. Each teacher will establish rules which are appropriate to the students and subject being taught in his or her room. General policies are set by the Head of School in consultation with the whole faculty, or with the director and teachers in each division of the school.

The object of the disciplinary code is to insure

- (1) The safety and well-being of students, faculty and others.
- (2) The order and integrity of the learning environment.
- (3) The development of responsibility, honesty, and respect for others.
- (4) Respect for the physical facilities of the school.
- (5) Behavior that is for the good of the school community.

School rules apply throughout the school day, anytime a student is on campus, and anytime a student represents St. Mark's Cathedral School or participates in an event as a member of the St. Mark's student body.

### **Consequences and Punishments**

St. Mark's Cathedral School is an educational institution, and as such the consequences and punishments for misbehavior are intended to be primarily educational rather than punitive. The Division Directors are largely responsible for addressing disciplinary matters. In cases involving suspension or if the Division Directors think it appropriate, the Head of School will be involved.

The Head of School, in his discretion and with full knowledge of the school board, may exercise such disciplinary measures as are appropriate, including the discharge of the student when in the best interest of the school.



In Lower School, consequences for misbehavior may involve removal from an activity; being sent to the Division Head's office; loss of recess, PE, or enrichment time; or other consequences appropriate to the offense which can help the child learn to behave more appropriately.

In Middle School, the following punishments are assigned: marks, detention, suspension, and expulsion. The more serious the offense, the more serious the consequence. If less serious infractions are repeated numerous times, the consequences will become more serious. Marks and detentions are assigned by the Middle School Director upon referral by individual teachers. Suspension is assigned with the approval of the Head of School.

St. Mark's Cathedral School does not employ corporal punishment.

## **Lower School Conduct Policy**

Lower School report cards will have a grade for conduct in the homeroom. Every week, each child will begin with 100 homeroom conduct points. In accordance with the class or grade-level policy, points will be deducted from the 100 point total. At the end of each week, the homeroom teacher will calculate the grade and this grade will be included in the weekly folder. If the misbehavior occurs on Friday after the weekly grade has been computed, the points will be deducted the following week. At the end of each nine-week period, the average of the weekly conduct grades will appear as a conduct grade on the report card.

In the event of serious infractions, additional punishments, such as loss of recess time, a conference with the division director, or suspension may be assigned. Parents will be contacted via note home, email, or a call in the case of more serious infractions. Serious infractions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Intentionally hurting another child, either physically or emotionally (see Harassment Policy). This includes cyber-bullying and hurtful or false statements in texts, social media, or other digital communication.
- Acts of dishonesty, including lying, stealing, or cheating.
- Consistent failure to follow school rules and procedures

In some cases, the school may elect not to allow a student to return in the next year or even expel the child from school in the current year if disruptive and inappropriate behaviors continue.

## **Middle School Conduct Code**

The following infractions will generally result in a student's being assigned a **mark**:

- Entering the church wing on the second floor (the main entrance by the receptionist's desk, the church parlor and offices) during the school day without permission. Purchasing a soft drink from the vending machines in the Ministry Center.
- Behaving inappropriately during chapel, assemblies, or field trips.
- Behaving inappropriately in class, homeroom, the halls, at lunch, or at carpool.
- Using unacceptable language.
- Bringing music or printed material with inappropriate language or images to school.

- Neglecting the study buddy or lunch area responsibilities.
- Using a prohibited electronic item (other than a cell phone) during school hours.
- Chewing gum.
- Repeatedly arriving late for class without an admit.
- Other infractions contained in the teachers' class rules.

Five marks for any combination of infractions during a quarter will result in a detention. All marks will be sent home to be signed by a parent or guardian. Marks are erased at the end of each quarter.

A **detention** will be normally given to students for the offenses listed below. Any teacher who witnesses the violation will give a detention.

- Accumulating five uniform violations in one quarter.
- Disrespect to a teacher or adult in charge.
- Abusing school property: marking on desks/walls or defacing bathrooms, etc.
- Stealing, defined as taking anyone else's property or materials without their permission.
- Forging a parent's signature.
- Using profanity or other euphemisms intended to shock or offend.
- Cheating
- Verbal or physical intimidation of another student including social cruelty and harassment. This includes Internet and cell phone usage at school and any physical evidence of abusive internet or cell phone bullying to other students from home. See Harassment Policy. (Note that if this is perceived to be an ongoing action it may be treated as a major offense.)
- Fighting or provoking a fight. (First or spontaneous incident.)
- Lying to a teacher.
- Leaving school grounds during school hours without permission.
- Gambling
- "Skipping" class.
- Entering cathedral or school maintenance areas or tampering with control boxes or maintenance equipment.
- Second offense for possession of prohibited electronic items (see below).
- Using a cell phone or failing to turn in a cell phone in to the homeroom teacher during the school day
- Intentionally visiting internet sites which are known to be inappropriate or otherwise violating the Acceptable Use Policy Technology Agreement (see below)
- Failure to report to detention unless previously excused.

Detention involves the loss of a student's time and reflecting upon more appropriate behavior. Students will be required to stay for one hour after school with the teacher who assigned the detention or with the Middle School Director. Depending upon the infraction, students may spend some or all of that time on constructive work on behalf of the school community, such as sweeping the gym floor or picking up trash on the playground. Students complete a worksheet in which they write about what they should have done and what they have learned. **Those infractions which involve dishonesty may require an additional meeting with the Head of School, who may choose to assign additional punishment beyond the detention.**

The following offenses will result in a **suspension**, either in or out of school at the discretion of the Head of School. **Repetition of any suspension-level offense may result in expulsion.**

- Ongoing bullying or harassment, including sexual harassment, such that another student does not feel safe at school. This includes Internet and cell phone usage at school and any evidence of abusive internet or cell phone bullying to other students away from school. See Harassment Policy.
- Fighting or provoking a fight (repeated or premeditated incident). The Division Head and Head of School will review the circumstances to determine whether detention or suspension is appropriate.
- Stealing items from the Church or School or of significant monetary value.
- Attending school or a school function under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Repetition of offenses for which detention has already been assigned.
- A third detention in a single school year. In such a case, the detention will become a one-day in-school suspension.

The following offenses have been determined by the Board of Trustees to carry the punishment of **suspension with possible expulsion**:

- Possession of any weapon (other than a gun) or anything that is used as a weapon.
- Possession of tobacco or alcohol or any controlled substance on school property or at a school-sponsored event.

The following offenses have been determined by the Board of Trustees to carry the punishment of **immediate suspension and automatic expulsion**:

- Carrying or possessing a gun at school or on the Cathedral grounds.
- Distributing, selling, giving, or loaning any illegal drug or controlled substance on school property or at a school sponsored event.

In addition to the specifically enumerated actions indicated above, the school reserves the right to **suspend or expel** students for actions which are determined to reflect either or both of the following:

- General incompatibility, that is repeated and ongoing violation of basic school rules and procedures to the extent that such behaviors negatively impact the learning environment of other students.
- Harming the good name of the school through actions which bring negative attention to the school through public or private behavior such as illegal or immoral activities.

**Suspension** usually involves a meeting/conference for both student and parents, and an in-school suspension from class of one (1) or more days with work assigned. The days of suspension will be scheduled to take place as soon as possible.

**Expulsion** is the loss of the privilege of attending St. Mark's Cathedral School. Students who are asked to leave for disciplinary reasons will not normally be readmitted. Parents will be sent a

formal letter stating the cause and effective date of the expulsion, and a copy of that letter will be placed in the permanent file, but the transcript or permanent academic record of the student will only indicate that the student has withdrawn.

## **Cheating**

In accordance with our Honesty Policy, the following behaviors will be considered cheating:

1. Copying work from another student or knowingly allowing another student to copy one's work.
2. Plagiarizing (in whole or part) work on a report, project, or other assignment. Plagiarism means using either the words or the ideas of another individual or source and claiming them as your own. Students are expected to indicate the source of information in reports and projects.
3. Using "crib notes," worksheets, answers from another student's paper, or other dishonest means to obtain answers during a test.
4. Asking for specific information contained on a test from a student who has already taken the test. Giving specific information contained on a test to a student who has not yet taken the test.
5. Changing answers on graded material when returned for class review.

Consequences for such behavior:

1. The student will be referred to the Director of Lower School or the Director of Middle School who will arrange a meeting with the parents and student.
2. The punishment may include a zero for the work in question, ineligibility for inclusion in the quarterly honor roll, loss of membership in the National Junior Honor Society, removal from the Student Council, and detention or suspension.

Consequences for a second offense:

1. The student and parents will meet with either the Director of Lower School or the Director of Middle School and the Head of School.
2. The punishment may include suspension or expulsion or any other punishment deemed appropriate by the Head of School.

## **Prohibited Electronic Items**

The following items are prohibited at school during the school day and should be left in lockers or backpacks: iPods, mp3 players, CD players, and any video game devices. All these devices will be confiscated **if they are in use during the school day without permission** and will be returned only to a parent; use during carpool will be allowed unless they disrupt the carpool because students are inattentive to the supervising teachers. A detention will be assigned for second and subsequent offenses.

Personal Technology and electronic readers (laptops, Ipads, Nooks, Kindles, etc) may only be used with teacher permission and only for reading or teacher-specified academic purposes. Repeated inappropriate or disallowed use will result in the student not being allowed to have such items at school at all until such time as the division director allows it again. At no time should any electronic device be used to record class time or instruction without the explicit approval of the teacher. Failure to abide by this rule will lead to the prohibition of keeping the electronic device at school and may result in detention.

## Cell Phones

Students may not have cell phones with them during the school day. Homeroom teachers will take up all cell phones in homeroom and return them at the end of the day. Phones must be completely off when students turn them in. A detention will be assigned to any student having a cell phone during the day. Students must give the phone to the homeroom teacher when checking in late and must pick up the phone if leaving early. Phones will be secured during the day and overnight if not picked up.

By allowing a student to come to school with a cell phone, the parents give the school full and unconditional permission to require the student to unlock the phone and allow the school to examine any and all information, images, and messages on the phone.

## Internet-enabled Watches or Personal Items

Watches or items which have internet and camera capabilities must be disabled such that they only function as watches, or they will be confiscated. Using such items

## Harassment Policy

St. Mark's Cathedral School is firmly committed to maintaining a school and work environment free from all forms of harassment, whether based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, age, or sexual orientation. Harassment of any St. Mark's student or employee, whether it is committed by a student, employee or visitor, is unacceptable behavior, violates both St. Mark's policy and state and federal discrimination laws, and will not be tolerated. **This policy includes, but is not limited to, sexual harassment and specifically includes digital/cyber activity.**

For purposes of this policy, harassment can be defined as:

- An incident or a course of action of bothersome, annoying, or offensive comments or conduct involving unwelcome remarks, jokes or slurs, or other verbal or physical conduct, which is known or should reasonably be known to be unwelcome (in the case of sexual harassment, it may include unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors.); or
- A sexual advance or solicitation made by a person who uses his/her position of authority to threaten any student or employee; or
- A reprisal or threat of reprisal for having invoked this policy, for having participated in an investigation under this policy, or for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- Conduct which has the purpose or effect of interfering with a student's activities or performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment at school;
- Unwelcome remarks, innuendoes or taunts about a person's race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation (including marital status, personal relationships, or sexual experience);
- The telling of racial, ethnic, religious, disability, age or sexually oriented jokes;

- The use of discriminatory or sexually charged language, racial slurs, or demeaning or derogatory comments based on an individual's race, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, age, or sexual orientation;
- The display of discriminatory, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate material in the workplace, including racial, ethnic, religious, disability, age, or sexually oriented cartoons, pictures, software or electronic material; and
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions or physical contact, such as touching, patting, pinching, or punching.

Every student and employee plays a part in ensuring that the school and the workplace is free from harassment. If you feel that you are being harassed, sexually or otherwise, you should:

- Ask the harasser to stop.
- If an employee, report the situation to your immediate supervisor.
- If a student, report the situation to a teacher with whom you feel comfortable approaching.
- If necessary, report the situation to any employee of the school's administration.

All complaints or reports will be handled in a timely and confidential manner. Only those people necessary for the investigation and resolution of the complaint will be involved or given information about the matter.

Anyone who is contacted by the school administration regarding a harassment complaint is expected to provide truthful statements regarding the alleged harassment. In addition, there will be no tolerance for those who retaliate against someone who, in good faith, brings forth a complaint of harassment.

St. Mark's is committed to investigating and appropriately resolving any situation related to harassment. If an allegation of discrimination or sexual harassment is substantiated by the investigation, St. Mark's will act promptly to eliminate the offensive conduct. The alleged offender will be disciplined in an appropriate manner, including written disciplinary warnings, suspension, expulsion or termination.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY TECHNOLOGY AGREEMENT**

St. Mark's Cathedral School is committed to monitoring the rapidly changing technological world and utilizing the latest techniques and equipment. This requires familiarization with current hardware and software, training in their use, and commitment to the legal and ethical responsibilities involved in such use. This commitment to technological excellence includes all members of the St. Mark's community – faculty and staff, students, and parents/guardians.

The following is the text of the agreement required of each student and his/her parent(s) before the student may use the school's technology resources.

### ***School Equipment***

St. Mark's has an extensive computer network that students can use to access the Internet and locally hosted programs (Accelerated Reader, Concourse), conduct on-line research, send e-mail, and complete course work. The school considers the use of the equipment of the school a privilege, not a right. The student or his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) must replace any equipment that is damaged or defaced by the student.

### ***Internet***

The Internet is an electronic highway connecting millions of computers and computer users all over the world. The Internet offers vast, diverse, and unique resources to both students and teachers. The goal in providing this service to students and teachers is to promote educational excellence in the school by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

With access to computers and people all over the world comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. St. Mark's has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials. However, on a global network, it is impossible to control all materials and an industrious user may discover inappropriate information.

The school firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction available on this worldwide network far outweigh the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the school.

Internet access requires proper conduct of end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. The school provides these guidelines to inform users of their responsibilities. If a user violates any of these provisions, his/her school network and/or Internet privileges will be reviewed and may be terminated, and future access denied.

St. Mark's does not assume responsibility for inappropriate materials acquired through Internet access at school. Purposely going to an inappropriate site on the Internet will result in a detention; repeated violation of this rule will result in suspension.

## ***Internet, Software, and Electronic Mail Terms and Conditions***

*Acceptable Use* – The use of school technology must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of St. Mark’s Cathedral School. Use of another organization’s network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to copyrighted materials, threatening or obscene material or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities is not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

*Privileges* –The use of Internet, school-purchased software and hardware, and electronic mail is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in discipline and a cancellation of some or all of those privileges. The system administrator and administrative staff will deem what is inappropriate use. Examples include repeatedly visiting inappropriate web sites, vandalism or mistreatment of software, hardware or student data, and disregard for netiquette. The system administrator may revoke a student’s network privileges at any time as required by inappropriate student use. The administration, faculty, and staff may request the system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges.

*Netiquette* – Network users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be polite. Refrain from transmitting abusive messages to others.
- Use appropriate language in public messages, private messages and material posted on Web pages. This means not using obscene, profane, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful language.
- Do not give out private information including full name, addresses and/or phone numbers over the Internet.
- Do not plagiarize works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of other and presenting them as if they were yours.
- Respect the rights of copyright owners. Copyright infringement occurs when one inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. If a work contains language that specifies appropriate use of that work, you should follow the expressed requirements. If you are unsure whether or not you can use a work, you should request permission from the copyright owner.
- The use of the network in a way that disrupts other users is prohibited.
- All communication and information accessible via the network should be assumed to be private property. Users will not repost a message sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent the message.
- Instant Messaging and Chat lines are expressly prohibited.

*Warranties* – St. Mark’s makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. St. Mark’s will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence and errors or omissions of the user. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user’s own risk. The school does not assume responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the access provided.



*Security* – Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Users will immediately notify a teacher or the technology coordinator if they have found possible security problems.

*Vandalism* – Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy the school’s software or hardware, the data of another user, the Internet, or any other agencies or networks is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

*Personal Software* – In keeping with copyright laws, software may not be installed on any school computer or file server without the express permission of the technology coordinator. Under no circumstance may a student copy software belonging to the school.

*Personal Computers* – Students may use their own laptops or tablets within the classroom for academic purposes provided they are adhering to the Acceptable Use Policy. Personal computers are not to be used for non-academic purposes without the express permission of the teacher.

*Social Networks* -- Students are prohibited from accessing social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) during the school day. While students are encouraged to “like” St. Mark’s Cathedral School’s Facebook page, their interactions with social media may not occur during the school day.

*Acceptance of Terms and Conditions* – All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to St. Mark’s Cathedral School. These terms and conditions reflect the entire agreement of the parties and supersede all prior oral or written agreements and understandings of the parties. These terms and conditions shall be governed and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Louisiana and the United States of America.

Violations of the St. Mark’s Acceptable Use Policy may lead to discipline, dismissal from computer projects with loss of credit, and/or the termination of network privileges and Internet access.

The following are considered as serious violations:

- attempts to login without a teacher’s permission and/or use of another student’s data
- theft or vandalism of hardware, software, or data of another user
- acquisition/dissemination of inappropriate material from the Internet and/or non-adherence to Internet protocols

The technology faculty may deny access to the network and Internet at St. Mark’s to any user identified as being a risk to security or having a history of problems with other computer systems.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **Lower School**

The following activities are generally available to St. Mark's Lower School students: Cub Scouts (boys), Girls Scouts, and Running Club. All Lower School students may also participate in the Cathedral's Chorister (choir) program, and 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students may participate in the Cathedral's youth bell-ringing lessons. All 5<sup>th</sup> graders assist with morning carpool duties and serve as first grade Chapel Buddies. 5<sup>th</sup> graders may also apply to participate in Destination Imagination, a program of interscholastic competition which involves creativity and collaboration. Team members will be selected based upon standardized testing, grades, and teacher assessments of those skills most necessary for success in the competition.

School-organized sports teams for Lower School include basketball and tennis. Basketball teams play in the Association of Shreveport Private Schools League, which employs the YMCA to schedule games and organize play. Tennis teams play in a league organized by the Querbes Tennis Center.

Our basketball league officially begins in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Based upon the number of 5<sup>th</sup> graders playing, 4<sup>th</sup> graders may be invited to participate on the 5<sup>th</sup> grade team. Playing time is not guaranteed. Depending upon the number of students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade and their relative abilities, some or all 4<sup>th</sup> graders may be encouraged to continue their skill development and gain more playing time by continuing to play Y or Upward basketball.

Sports teams for other sports are generally organized by parents through local organizations such as the YMCA, Cabosa, or Little League. Parents are asked to make every effort to make sure all boys/girls in a class/grade are given the opportunity to play on teams with their classmates.

### **Middle School**

St. Mark's sponsors a variety of extra-curricular activities for Middle School students. These include programs with academic, athletic, spiritual, or service focus. St. Mark's is a member of the Association of Shreveport Private Schools basketball league, which allows schools to have boys and girls teams for 5<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> grades. The school athletic director organizes and supervises these teams. The school also offers Cross-country, golf, and tennis as team sports for Middle School students. Boys may play football through the Jets program, which is a team for students attending the private schools of our basketball league; girls may play on the Jets Softball team. Cheerleading is offered for girls in grades 6-8. St. Mark's has a no-cuts policy for its sports teams and cheerleading programs. Though most students will play in most games, there is no mandated amount of playing time for players. Parents are expected to respect the coach's decisions with regard to playing time.

Middle School Clubs include the Student Council, National Junior Honor Society, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Service Leadership Club. Destination Imagination teams are by invitation and meet after school. All Middle School students are eligible to participate in the Teacher's Assistant program. Other clubs may be formed based upon adequate student interest and appropriate adult sponsorship.

Student Council officers are elected in the spring to serve the following year. Officers are expected to attend a Student Council training camp in June. Class representatives are elected in the fall. The Student Council sponsors school dances and other activities in support of school spirit. Members are expected to adhere to academic and behavioral standards. Officers and a few senators attend the LASC conference which normally takes place over the Martin Luther King Day Break.

National Junior Honor Society selection is based upon criteria established by the national organization. Students who meet the scholastic requirements are invited to apply for membership. Final Selection is by the NJHS Faculty council, based upon evidence of leadership, service, citizenship and character.

# SCHOOL DANCE GUIDELINES 2017-18

## These guidelines apply to all dances held by

St. John Berchmans Cathedral School  
St. Joseph Catholic School  
St. Mark's Cathedral School  
First Baptist Church School  
Southfield School

- **Attire**

- No ripped or torn clothing
- Boys: No athletic shorts
- Girls: No shorts
- No sunglasses
- No hats
- No inappropriate writing on t-shirt (e.g., references to drugs, alcohol, inappropriate behavior, provocative language)
- Girls may wear long pants or capri pants.
- Girls may wear \*appropriate length skirts, dresses, or tunics with leggings (Check with School Sponsor when in doubt)
- Girls may wear leggings with \*appropriate length skirts, dresses, or tunics (Check with School Sponsor when in doubt)
- No strapless or spaghetti strap tops or dresses
- No bare midriffs, including tops that expose midriff with arms raised
- THEMED DANCES may have separate guidelines

*Students who are inappropriately dressed according to the above guidelines (and any other guidelines issued for particular themed dances) will not be admitted.*

\*School Dances follow school dress code guidelines in handbook

### **Bags**

- All bags and backpacks will be stored for the duration of the dance.
- Purses may be checked at the door.

- **Admission**

- Students must check in at the door.
- Only students on their school's list will be admitted. Each school will provide photos of its students.
- Once admitted to the dance, a student may not leave the dance without a parent or authorized adult.
- Admission is \$5.00 unless otherwise specified by the school.
- Concessions will be sold. Snacks and drinks must stay within area specified by school and are not allowed on the dance floor.
- No running in the dance area or concession area.

- **Cell Phone Use**

- Inappropriate use of cell phone, including any and all social media, will be subject to disciplinary action per individual school policy.

## EPISCOPAL WORSHIP

School chapels at St. Mark's Cathedral School conform to the liturgical principles of worship as found in *The Book of Common Prayer*. Students and parents who come from other religious traditions and are not familiar with Episcopal worship may find the information below helpful. Students and parents are encouraged to contact the School Chaplain anytime they have questions about school worship; all school families are always welcome to worship at the Cathedral, and the Dean and Cathedral clergy are always available as well for questions about the Episcopal Church or for pastoral counseling.

### **The Church Year**

In order to make sure we are taught the important events in the life of Christ and His Church, the Episcopal Church and this school utilize the church calendar. In this calendar, the year is divided into seasons. Each season emphasizes certain parts of Jesus' life and asks us to reverence those events by our attitude of life and worship. Class activities may be tied to these seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost.

### **Customs at Episcopal Worship Services**

In Episcopal Church worship services, we follow certain customs.

**Upon entering the Church:** When we come into church, we are entering a sacred space. We are all asked to be silent. This silence allows those who wish to do so to prepare themselves for worship in prayer and meditation. We are also better prepared to hear what God might want to say to us through His Holy Word.

**Honoring the Cross and Altar:** It is customary to honor the altar when entering and leaving the Church. Pausing briefly at the end of the pew and bowing slightly does this. We also bow as the cross goes by in procession during the singing of the entrance hymn or the recessional hymn.

**Kneeling:** The general rule of thumb is to kneel when praying, stand when singing, and sit when listening. One exception is that we stand for the reading of the Gospel during Holy Eucharist.

**Receiving Communion:** Holy Communion is "open" in the Episcopal Church for all those who have been baptized and who are of an age to receive communion in their own church. The Bread, or Host, is received by placing the right hand, palm up, in the left palm. The person then may either touch the wine with the wafer, or may take a small sip from the chalice after consuming the wafer. Gluten-free Hosts are available for those who need them. Children who do not receive communion may cross their arms over their chest as a sign to the clergy that they should receive a blessing. Parents should discuss with their children whether they wish them to receive communion.

# **Parents' Club Charter and By-Laws**

Adopted May 29, 1995

Revised Spring 2001

## **Article I**

### **Name**

The name of this organization shall be: St. Mark's Cathedral School Parents' Club (hereafter referred to as "PC").

## **Article II**

### **Position and Mission Statement**

Section I: The objectives of the PC shall be

- A. To develop mutual friendship and a spirit of cooperation among parents, staff, administration and Cathedral.
- B. To develop interest and understanding among parents, teachers and friends in the school's programs and purposes.
- C. To raise funds and to aid in development and expansion of school's facilities and equipment and academic, cultural and athletic programs.
- D. To encourage and promote attendance and support of school activities.
- E. To act as a liaison between parents, faculty and School Board.

## **Article III**

### **Membership**

Section I: The membership of the PC shall include

- A. Parents and guardians of current St. Mark's Cathedral School students, who shall have voting power of one vote per parent or guardian.
- B. Friends of St. Mark's Cathedral School, for purpose of discussion and evaluation who shall hold no voting power.

## **Article IV**

### **Officers/Executive Board**

Section I: The Officers shall consist of President, Vice-President (who is also President-Elect), Secretary, Treasurer and immediate past President (Ex Officio).

Section II: The Executive Board shall consist of: President (who shall serve as Chairman), Vice-President (who is also President-Elect), Secretary, Treasurer and immediate past President (Ex Officio).

Section III: Election and Terms of Officers

- A. Slated annually by a Nominating Committee consisting of
  1. The current President shall serve as a Chairman of this nominating committee,
  2. The President-Elect
  3. Three (3) members-at-large, who shall be elected by a vote of the general membership no later than the February PC meeting. These members shall not

be eligible to serve as an officer for the succeeding year, and may not be a current member of the School Board, Cathedral vestry, school faculty or administration, and

4. The Headmaster who shall act in an advisory capacity with no voting rights.
- B. The Nominating Committee shall present the slate of officers of the new President-Elect, Secretary, and Treasurer to the general membership at the May meeting.
  1. The Nominating Committee shall set a deadline for the submission of nominees for offices of the PC. This deadline shall be communicated to the PC at least two (2) weeks prior to the deadline for submission.
  2. The Chairman of the Nominating Committee shall present the single slate of officers for final approval no later than the May meeting.
- C. The newly elected officers shall serve from June 1 – May 31.
- D. In the event that an officer must resign from his or her position, the Nominating Committee will convene to select a replacement to fulfill the remaining term.
- E. Officers may not be current members of the Cathedral vestry, School Board, school faculty or administration.

#### Section IV: Duties and Responsibilities

- A. The duties of the **President** shall be
  1. To serve as an ex officio member of the School Board.
  2. To conduct general PC meetings.
  3. To chair the Executive Board and schedule meetings of same.
  4. To schedule no less than four (4) meetings per school year of the Executive Board.
  5. To serve as a liaison between PC, School Board, and school administration.
  6. To monitor each Event Committee regarding responsibilities and budget.
  7. To spend up to \$500 at any one time without the approval of the Executive Board and up to \$5,000 with the approval of the Executive Board for a specific administration or Executive Board request.
  8. To monitor receipts and disbursements of PC funds.
  9. To respond to PC correspondence as necessary.
- B. The duties of the **Vice-President** shall be
  1. To assume the duties of the President when he/she is absent.
  2. To serve as Room Parent Coordinator.
  3. To serve on the Executive Committee.
  4. To assist the President in his/her duties as needed and to perform other duties as requested by the President.
- C. The duties of the **Secretary** shall be
  1. To take the minutes of PC meetings and submit them to the school secretary for publication in the weekly newsletter, “Weekly Words”.
  2. To serve on the Executive Committee.
  3. To keep a file of correspondence directed to PC.
  4. To assist the President with PC correspondence as necessary.
  5. To make meeting arrangements.
  6. To assist the Event Chairmen in completing files with all pertinent information regarding fundraisers or events.

- D. The duties of the **Treasurer** shall be
  - 1. To keep a record of all club funds and to be the custodian thereof.
  - 2. To serve on the Executive Board.
  - 3. To monitor all bills, and to disburse funds as directed by the Executive Board.
  - 4. To present a financial report at each regular meeting.
  - 5. To assist the school bookkeeper with records.
  
- E. The duties of the Past President include acting in an advisory capacity on the Executive Board with no voting rights, except in the event of a tie.

**Article V**  
Membership Meetings

Section 1: Meeting Requirements

- A. Meetings shall occur a minimum of four (4) times during the school calendar year.
- B. The Executive Board shall call a meeting within ten (10) days of receiving a written request of fifteen (15) or more voting members.
- C. The majority of those members present constitutes a quorum.

**Article VI**  
Committee Chairmen

Section 1: Selection

- A. Selection of both Events Chairmen and Room Parents shall be based on parental interest.
- B. Events Chairmen shall be appointed by both the incoming and outgoing Executive Boards under the direction of the President-Elect.
- C. Room Parents shall be appointed by the Executive Board, based on their recommendations, and notified by the Vice-President by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

Section II: Responsibilities

- A. Plan and execute various events, based on existing guidelines approved by the Executive Board.
- B. Keep a detailed account of the planning and execution of that event which will then be stored in the permanent PC files.

**Article VII**  
Fiscal Year

Section I: The PC fiscal year shall be June 1 – May 31.

**Article VIII**  
Amendments

Section I: The PC by-laws may be amended by a majority vote, providing the proposed by-law amendment has been recommended by an Ad Hoc committee formed with this specific purpose. Written notice must be circulated to all PC members at least fifteen (15) days prior to any vote to be taken at the next PC meeting.



**Article IX**  
Dissolution

Section I: In the event of the dissolution or liquidation of the PC, all assets shall be conveyed or distributed to St. Mark's Cathedral School Foundation, Shreveport, Louisiana.

## WHO'S WHO AND WHOM TO CALL

### **Robin Jennings, School Secretary**

Miss Jenny keeps the front desk as you enter the school and answers the main school phone. Call her to report that your child will be absent from or late to school or if you need to make carpool or after school arrangements. She keeps the school calendar and can normally answer questions about schedules and special events. She will always know whom to ask if you ask something she doesn't know. **221-7454**

### **Lisa Sigrest, Business Manager**

Ms. Sigrest supervises all school financial and human resource matters. Call her to discuss questions about payment plans, tuition insurance, your past due bill, or Financial Aid. **226-4059**

### **Tiffany Magierowski, Accounts Manager and Registrar**

Mrs. Magierowski handles accounts payable and receivable, manages monthly statements, and is responsible for maintaining the school's databases. Call her if you have a question about a particular item that was on your monthly statement or if you need help with RenWeb or FACTS or ASM enrollment. **226-4021**

### **Sarah Cantwell, Director of Admissions and Communication**

Mrs. Cantwell handles all admissions and marketing procedures for the school. Call her for questions about referring families to our school, social media, or our school website. You may also share suggestions regarding marketing, public relations, and parent communications. **226-4036**

### **Kim Carter, Director of Development**

Mrs. Carter oversees the school's fundraising operations with primary emphasis on the Annual Fund and supporting the Parents' Club's fundraising activities, especially Fiesta. Her duties also include alumni relations and record-keeping, and design and marketing activities as they apply to development. Call her if you have questions about Annual Fund, Fiesta, or other fundraising activities. **226-7156**

### **Jessica Russo, Preschool Director**

Miss Jessica directs all daily operations in grades PS 2-K. Call her anytime you have concerns about your preschool child's developmental progress, peer relations, or classroom experience. **226-4030**

### **Alexis Wedgeworth, Lower School Director**

Miss Wedgeworth shares responsibilities for K and directs all daily operations in grades 1<sup>st</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>. Call her if you are worried about your elementary-aged child's academic progress, social interactions, or classroom experience. **226-4052**

### **Olivia Bradley, Middle School Director**

Mme Bradley directs all daily operations in grades 6-8. Call her anytime you have concerns about your middle school child's academic progress, social relations, classroom experience, or extra-curricular activities other than sports. **226-4039 (o), 218-2305 (c)**

**Jay Turner, Athletic Director**

Coach Turner directs all athletic activities for teams organized by St. Mark's as part of our Middle School athletic league(s). Call him if you have a question about sports schedules or athletic policies in Lower or Middle School. **226-4051**

**Robin Carter, ASM Director (Little School)**

Miss Robin runs the afterschool program for the Little School. Call her if you need to make changes in your after school pickup times or have questions about ASM activities.

**Martha Whitehead, ASM Director (Big School)**

Mrs. Whitehead runs the afterschool program for Lower and Middle Schools. She also assists in the front office in the afternoon before ASM begins. Call her if you need to make changes in your after school pickup times or have questions about ASM activities. **349-7870 (c)**

**Judy Kane, School Chaplain, Asst. Middle School Director, Curriculum Coordinator**

Chaplain Kane assists Mme Bradley in a variety of ways in the Middle School and coordinates school worship services with the Cathedral clergy and organizes student acolytes and readers. In addition to her chapel duties, she teaches Christian Education for grades 5-8, offers pastoral counseling as needed throughout the school, and coordinates our outreach/service projects. Call Chaplain Kane if you have questions about the religious life of the school or if your child is having personal difficulties and might benefit from extra attention or pastoral counseling. **226-4035**

**Candace Anderson, School Nurse/Office Aide**

Mrs. Anderson is a Registered Nurse who works approximately two hours per day. As School Nurse she has responsibility for maintaining our immunization records and insuring that St. Mark's complies with school health regulations. She maintains the list of students with allergies or other chronic illnesses and makes sure that teachers know their medical needs and treatment plans. In the event of a public health outbreak, she coordinates the school's response. Mrs. Anderson is available during the morning to assist in the event of a serious injury or health emergency but her primary duties are administrative rather than clinical. Call her at the main switchboard: **221-7454**.

**Chris Carter, Head of School**

Call Dr. Carter if you have already called the appropriate administrator and do not believe your concern has been adequately addressed, or if you have a question or concern about an institutional matter that involves more than one division or the school's relations with the Cathedral or wider community. **226-4028**