



Elementary School

204 Hickory Ave.
Bel Air, MD 21014
Phone: 410-879-1113
Fax: 410-838-5879

Middle School

1716A Churchville Rd.
Bel Air, MD 21015
Phone: 410-877-9660
Fax: 410-420-9322

**ST. MARGARET SCHOOL
PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK
2025-2026**

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St. Margaret School is a co-ed elementary school for grades PreK 3 through grade 8. St. Margaret School is one school located on two campuses. Grades PK through grade 5 are located on the Elementary School campus and grades 6 through 8 are located at the Middle School campus. St. Margaret School reserves the right to amend the Parent/Student Handbook and parent(s)/legal guardian(s) will be notified of any changes made. This Parent/Student Handbook is an informative booklet for parents and students setting forth the rules and policies of the school and is not intended as an expressed or implied contract.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Archdiocese of Baltimore's Vision Statement

The Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore nurture and sustain the God-given gifts of every person, especially students, to be used in service to the Mission of Jesus.

Archdiocese of Baltimore's Mission Statement

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Baltimore provide a Christ-centered education that is academically excellent and empowers students to reach their full potential - spiritually, intellectually, physically, socially, and morally. Fostered through robust collaboration among all stakeholders, the mission is accomplished through accountable leadership at all levels, ongoing and coordinated strategic planning, centralized efficiencies, and financial sustainability.

Vision Statement

At St. Margaret School we strive to:

- Foster our students' faith by providing a Christ-filled learning environment which promotes prayer, reflection, and service
- Teach our students to be independent thinkers and problem solvers, so that they are prepared for challenges beyond the classroom
- Sustain a professional community of highly effective faculty and staff committed to the school's mission through continuous learning opportunities and a favorable comparison of salaries with surrounding districts
- Ensure operational vitality by maintaining a fiscally responsible budget and capital plan that considers trends in enrollment management and marketing, upgrading school facilities, and provides the highest quality of education aligning with the mission of our school

Mission Statement

St. Margaret School is a parish school in the Archdiocese of Baltimore offering a rigorous academic program while focusing on GRIT (God, Respect, Responsibility, Integrity and Teamwork). As a child of God, each student is encouraged to live the Gospel message and

spread the Good News through his or her words and actions. Our graduates are equipped to be faith-filled 21st century learners and leaders.

History of the School

St. Margaret School (SMS), the oldest parochial school still in operation in Harford County, opened May 1, 1911, six years after Fr. Alphonsus Frederick founded St. Margaret Church. From that first day of school, when 43 pupils were enrolled and guided by two Catholic School Sisters of Notre Dame, through the current school year, St. Margaret has been providing a quality Catholic education to students throughout the Harford County area.

Accreditation

St. Margaret School is accredited by Cognia through June 2027. In accordance with standards set by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, St. Margaret School met the requirements established by the Cognia Accreditation Commission and Board of Trustees and was thereby accredited by the SACS Council on Accreditation and School Improvement.

National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)

St. Margaret School is a member of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA).

Awards and Accolades

Green School Award - The Maryland Association for Environmental & Outdoor Education awarded St. Margaret School the Green School Award in the year 2023. This award is bestowed upon schools that comply with their criteria for classroom integration of environmental issue instruction; environmental related professional development for the faculty; celebration of the numerous school's achievements; demonstration of selected conservation best management practices; and sustained school-community partnerships to enhance environmental learning.

2025-2026 Faculty and Staff

Administrative Team

Pastor	Msgr. Kevin Schenning
Principal	Mrs. Anna C. Shanahan
ES Assistant Principal	Mrs. Terri Castelli
ES Assistant Principal	Mrs. Lauren Kimmel
MS Assistant Principal	Mrs. Anne Askey
Admissions Director	Mrs. Allyson Hill
School Counselor Pre-K-Grade 5	Mrs. Michelle Curran
School Counselor Grades 6-8	Mrs. Peggy Messaris

Technology Team

Technology Coordinator	Mr. Sean Ballweber
Assistant Technology Coordinator	Mr. Jon Gerstmyer

Faculty and Staff

Pre-Kindergarten 3
Pre-Kindergarten 4

Kindergarten

Grade 1

Grade 2

Grade 3

Grade 4

Grade 5

Grade 6

Grade 7

Grade 8

MS Math Teachers

Music K-5

Music 6-8

Art K-8

ES Physical Education

MS Physical Education

Spanish PreK-5

Spanish 6-8

Media/Technology

ES Resource

Mrs. Robyn Hirsch
Mrs. Stacy Peach
Mrs. Michelle Forrest
Mrs. Linda Dockery
Mrs. Brigitte Gwiazdowski
Mrs. Briana Olsen
Mrs. Mary Beth Sieck
Mrs. Allie Hagerman
Mrs. Abby Lowe
Mrs. Jennifer Nice
Mrs. Taylor Johnson
Mrs. Linda Remsky
Mrs. Michelle Swenson
Mrs. Kim Bogdan
Mrs. Ariel Contino
Mrs. Kim Szymanowski
Mrs. Chris Barnes
Mrs. Eileen Healy
Mrs. Stephanie Moore
Mrs. Mary Beth Ballweber
Mrs. Megan Bredlow
Mrs. Kate Clark
Mrs. Kristine Campbell
Mrs. Lisa Gostomski
Mrs. Stacey Reynolds
Mrs. Jill Doran
Ms. Noelle Teramani
Mrs. Nicole Thomas
Mrs. Kari Hinder
Mrs. Lisa Komondor
Mr. Richard Hauf
Mrs. Connie Cordell
Ms. Rebecca Lewis

Mrs. Margaret Gerstmyer
Mr. Richard Hauf
Mrs. Caroline Piotrowski
Mr. Doug Sharretts
Mr. Ontel Alcalde
Mrs. Hannah Roy
Mrs. Pauli Dillon
Mrs. Jessica Engel
Mrs. Chrissy Grant
Ms. Melissa Miller

MS Resource
ES Nurse
MS Nurse
MS Religion/Virtus
Coordinator/Office Assistant

Mrs. Kelly Link
Mrs. Elizabeth Ottens
Mrs. Megan Porter

Instructional Aides

Mrs. Tricia Coleman
Mrs. Nancy Henterly
Mrs. Megan Klug
Mrs. Kathy Mullin
Mrs. Anna Marie Ohler
Mrs. Janet Rittershofer
Mrs. Faith Slone
Mrs. Megan Smith
Mrs. Shaina Sweeney
Mrs. Christina Tompkins
Mrs. Kaitlyn Van Daniker

Administrative Assistant
ES Secretary
MS Secretary
Business Manager
Bookkeeper
Extended Day Care Director

Mrs. Kendra Buza
Mrs. Tina Schultz
Mrs. Paula Schafer
Mrs. Donna Bynion
Mrs. Donna Reigner
Mrs. Paige Henry

School Board Members

Pastor
Principal

Msgr. Kevin Schenning
Mrs. Anna Shanahan

President
Members:

Mr. Michael Thomson
Mr. Steve DiBiagio
Mrs. Cindy Height
Mr. Jeremy Joseph
Mrs. Terri Lyons
Mrs. Cindi Stewart

School Calendar 2025 -2026

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has a plan in case of inclement weather or unforeseen school closings:

Day 1: Closed

Day 2: Closed

Day 3: Closed

Day 4: Asynchronous Learning

Day 5: Asynchronous Learning

Day 6 and Beyond: Add a day of instruction to the calendar

St. Margaret School has identified 3 inclement weather days into the calendar. If the school does not close due to inclement weather or unforeseen events (Day 1, Day 2, Day 3), then the administrators have decided that school will not occur on these days: April 13, April 27, May 4.

Please note that for each inclement weather day that is used, the one of the above planned days off will be removed- meaning the students and staff will be in school. Please check the Principal's Post for details.

Two asynchronous ½ days, Friday, November 14 and Friday, February 27, are planned for the students during the 2025-2026 school year. Students will be responsible for completion of work as the assignments will be graded..

The school calendar is available [here](#) or on our school website at smsch.org.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Elementary School Campus (ES) Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ARRIVAL: K- 5th grades: Arrival at 7:45-8:05am

Students MUST remain in their vehicles until 7:45AM. Staff will not be available until that time to check students into the buildings. Parents will have to sign into the main office if your student arrives after 8:05am.

Morning drop-off takes place on the school playground parking lot. Drive onto the lot from the Wright Street entrance off Hickory Avenue. Cars may only turn right onto Wright Street. This is a posted regulation and violators may be ticketed by the Bel Air Town Police. Following a horseshoe pattern, enter the lot and pull up until near the exit. Students exit through the right car door only. Students will walk directly to their homerooms from their vehicles. **No parents should drop off students in the church lot. This area is reserved for the Early Childhood Center.**

Grades K Olsen, 1, 2, and 4 will enter the white building doors closest to the playground.

Grades K, 3 and 5 will enter the brick building through the Gym door.



PreK4 EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER ARRIVAL- Arrival at 8:05-8:15 am

PreK-4 parents will enter the church lot from Hickory Ave., and drive up to the Early Childhood Center entrance. You will be greeted by the classroom teacher who will prompt you through the arrival procedures. Once completed, the student will be escorted into the building. You will then proceed to exit the lot. Parents will have to sign into the main office if your student arrives after 8:15am. Instruction begins at 8:15am.



PreK3 ARRIVAL- Arrival at 8:05-8:20am

PreK3 parents will pull into the playground parking lot by making a right from Hickory Avenue onto Wright St. No left turns are allowed from Hickory Avenue. Turn into the parking lot and remain to the right of the cones near the white building. Pull around to the side of the white building near the nurse door entrance. This is where Mrs. Hirsch will come out to individually get students from each vehicle at 8:20am. Please remain in your vehicle and have your child unbuckled once you pull up near the nurse entrance.



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISMISSAL K-5th grades:

Parents are permitted to park in the parking lot (see below) or on other streets and walk up to the school. **The parking lot will open at 2:30pm- A staff member will open the lot at that time. Cars must pull forward to create multiple parking lines.** Parents are to hold up a sign with last name posted, and supervise their children following dismissal. Students are not permitted to remain on campus to play unsupervised.

Kindergarten will dismiss at 2:50pm.

Grades 1-5 will dismiss at 2:55pm.

Students will remain in the building with the teacher at the location listed below. Any student not picked up by 3:05 will go to the main office to call their parents. Students will remain in the main office building until they are dismissed. Charges will apply for late pick up.

Dismissal locations by grade level:

Kindergarten Dismissal- 2:50pm Main office doors (lobby area brick building) and Mrs. Olsen from the white building door to the parking lot

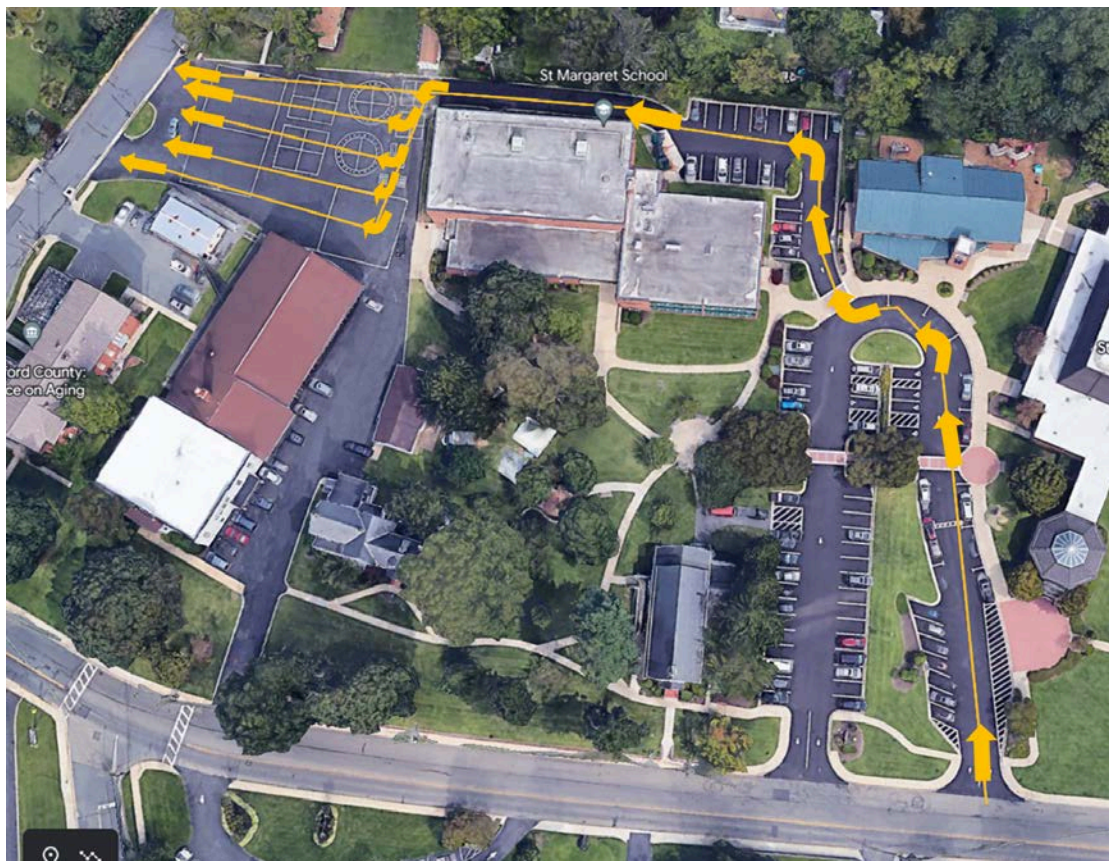
Grade 1 Dismissal- White building doors to parking lot

Grade 2 Dismissal- White building nurse door exit (before grade 4).

Grade 3 Dismissal- Brick building main office doors (lobby area brick building) after K dismiss.

Grade 4 Dismissal- White building nurse door exit (after grade 2 exits)

Grade 5 Dismissal- Brick building gym door leading to parking lot.



PreK 4 EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER DISMISSAL- Dismissal at 2:20pm (½ day 11:20am)

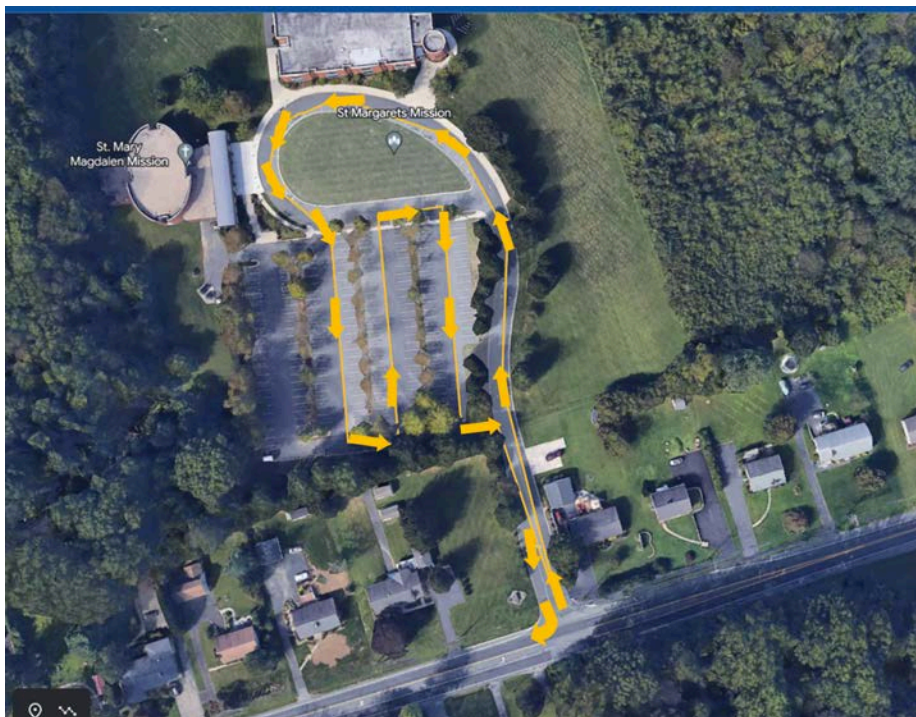
At dismissal, PreK-4 parents will drive into the church lot and when you arrive at the entrance to the Early Childhood Center, your child will be escorted to you by the classroom teacher and/or aide. This is the same procedure as arrival.

PreK 3 DISMISSAL - Dismissal at 11:20am

At dismissal the elementary students are in session. No cars are permitted in the parking lot or near the white building during this time of the day. We ask that parents park on Hickory Avenue and walk to the entrance between the white building and the rectory/priest garages. Your child will be dismissed one by one. Please do not congregate at the doors. We ask that for the sake of the other students in our building that parents do not arrive until as close to 11:20am as possible.

MiddleSchool Campus (MS) Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

MIDDLE SCHOOL ARRIVAL Parents arriving prior to 7:20 AM should park in designated lanes. Students must remain in their vehicles. A staff member will indicate when it is time for the students to exit their vehicles and proceed to the school building. Beginning at 7:20 AM, cars are to proceed slowly down the driveway past the parking lot to the semi-circle. Students should exit vehicles curbside at either the main office doors or the doors near the mission depending on door assignment. The students will proceed directly to their classrooms. Cars should not pull around stopped cars to exit the lot. Please permit all cars in front of you to pull off and then proceed. Follow the designated exit pattern through the parking lot.



MIDDLE SCHOOL DISMISSAL - Dismissal at 2:30pm

Cars are to proceed slowly down the driveway past the parking lot and turn left along the straight curb of the semi-circle. The semi-circle will be closed to all traffic at pick-up time. Proceed straight and park in the assigned lanes for each grade level within the parking lot. Parents/guardians picking up 8th graders will park in lane 1 (closest to the mission). Lane 2 will be for 7th grade. Lane 3 will be for 6th grade. Lane 4 will be for overflow parking. Once students are dismissed and walking to cars, all lanes are closed while the students are finding their vehicles. There should be at least three rows of cars in each lane. Please follow the directions of the faculty in the parking lot.

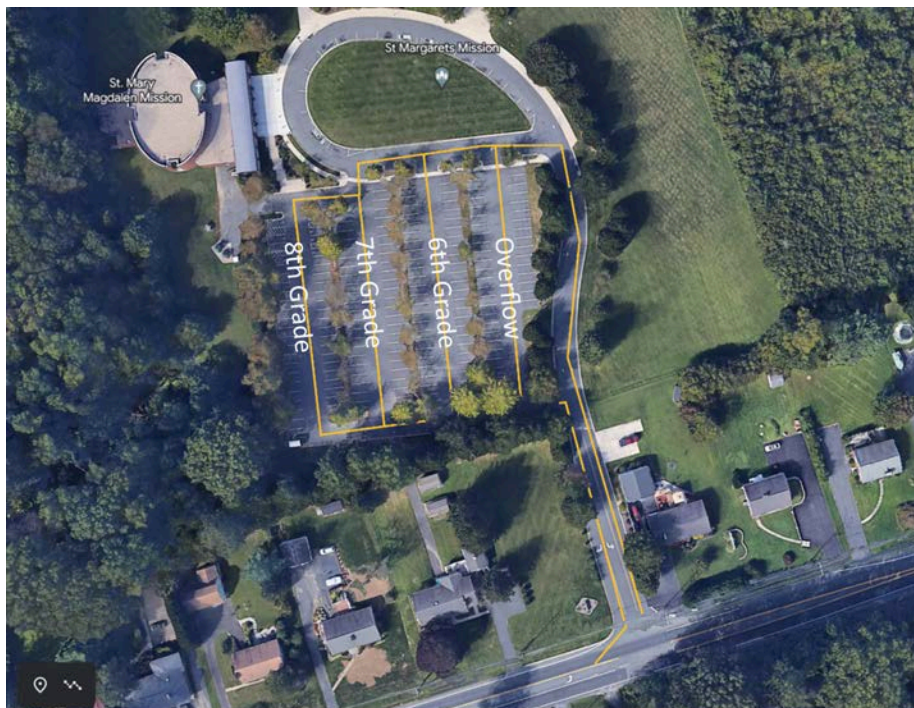
Carpools/Siblings:

If your middle school carpool includes students in multiple middle school grades, please park in the 7th grade lane only.

Students are not permitted to congregate in the parking lot. When exiting the lot at dismissal, cars should only make a right hand turn onto Route 22. Left hand turns block the vision of right turning drivers and are risky at any time onto Route 22. Please be patient as cars need to be careful exiting onto Route 22.

If the student is participating in a scheduled, supervised activity before or after school, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pick-up at the designated times.

Students are only to be released to custodial parents or those adults listed on emergency contact forms. Students should never be allowed to leave school in an UBER, Lyft, or any private transportation company.



Middle School at ES Campus Days

When middle school students are at the elementary school campus, they should arrive at their usual time and enter through the main office door. Dismissal will also take place at the usual time, with homeroom teachers escorting students from the gym door to the parking lot. Students will follow their teacher's directions to find their parents. Middle school students who are picking up a sibling will wait in the gym until kindergarten dismissal begins.

CATHOLIC IDENTITY

The official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church are taught in St. Margaret School. The faith formation program is under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop. The curriculum integrates the six tasks of catechesis and is developed in accord with the Archdiocesan faith formation curriculum guidelines published by the Institute for Evangelization. Students attend religion classes, participate in liturgical celebrations, and participate in the religious activities of the school. Parents receive information about the faith formation program in the school and the school's expectations of their child(ren) with regard to religion both as an academic discipline and as a lived faith.

Adoration

Students in all grades will participate in Catholic Eucharistic Adoration. Adoration is an opportunity for students to pray in the presence of the blessed sacrament.

Advent

During the season of Advent, students participate in special faith-filled traditions to prepare their hearts for the coming of Christ. They take part in Adoration and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, fostering prayer and reflection. Each homeroom displays an Advent wreath, and students join together in morning prayer to mark the weeks of Advent. Additional special activities help our school community grow in faith, hope, and joy during this sacred season.

Blessed Mother Mary and the Rosary

St. Margaret School honors Mary during the month of October centering around the Rosary and during the month of May with a May Procession and Crowning. On both campuses, we have dedicated space honoring Mary.

Catholic Schools Week

Each year we celebrate Catholic Schools week beginning with a school Mass the Sunday before Catholic Schools week. During the week students and staff celebrate our faith, community, and service through various activities.

Class Masses

Class Masses are a meaningful way for each grade level to come together in prayer and grow in faith. Class Masses will be held for grades 1-7 throughout the year. Preschool and kindergarten have closing prayer services, and 8th grade has a graduation Mass in June.

Daily Prayer

At St. Margaret School daily prayers are an integral part of our Catholic Identity. Students pray during morning and afternoon announcements, the Angelus, as well as before each subject area class. Schoolwide monthly scripture verses are taught and reflected on throughout the year.

Hallow App

Our school has partnered with Hallow, the #1 Catholic prayer platform to provide Hallow as a resource to strengthen both the mental and spiritual health of the school community. Hallow contains over 10,000 audio-guided prayers spanning from quick minute meditations to entire holy hours, dozens of music albums and 'praylists,' and everything in between. In the classroom Hallow will be used to build virtue, enhance prayer experiences and liturgical seasons/celebrations, and learn more about the Saints and the history of the church.

Lent

During Lent, students participate in prayer, reflection, and acts of service as they prepare for Easter. Each homeroom displays a Lenten prayer space, and morning prayers focus on the themes of repentance and renewal. Students take part in the Stations of the Cross, reconciliation, and other special activities that deepen their faith and understanding of the Lenten season.

May Procession and Crowning

Each year in May, we honor the Blessed Mother with a special procession, Mass, the crowning of Mary, and the recitation of the Rosary. This cherished tradition allows our school community to come together in prayer and devotion, expressing our love and reverence for Mary as the Mother of God.

Pastor's Contact Information and Short Biography

Monsignor Schenning is a Baltimorean. He was born in 1954, the second son of Matthew F. Schenning of Highlandtown and Kathleen Hannon Schenning from County Mayo, Ireland. Father Kevin is of German-Dutch and Irish descent. Father Kevin grew up in the Shrine of the Little Flower Parish in northeast Baltimore. He attended elementary school there and began high school at Saint Paul's Latin Day Seminary. When Saint Paul's closed, he attended Cardinal Gibbons High school and graduated from there in 1972. Father Kevin earned his college degree at Saint Mary's Seminary College in Catonsville and then entered Saint Mary's Seminary and University in the Roland Park area of Baltimore. He was awarded his Masters in Divinity Degree in 1981 and ordained a Deacon in May of that year. He was assigned to Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Baynesville for his diaconal experience and was then ordained to the priesthood on November 28, 1981.

He has served very well in a number of parishes during his years as a priest:

- Associate Pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Essex from 1981 to 1988
- Associate Pastor of Saint Dominic Parish in Hamilton from 1988 to 1994
- Pastor of Saint Joan of Arc Parish in Aberdeen from 1994 to 2000
- Pastor of Saint Jane Frances de Chantal Parish in Rivera Beach from 2000 to 2004

- Pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Fullerton from 2004 to 2016.

In December 2009, Pope Benedict recognized all that Father had done by bestowing the title on him of Monsignor. Throughout his years as a priest, Father Kevin has served on the Archdiocesan Presbyteral (Priests) Council, the Core Team for City Ministry, and the Priests Personnel Board.

Monsignor Schenning can be contacted at the parish office-(410) 879-2670.

Prayer Partners

Grade levels are partnered (both ES and MS) and participate in opportunities throughout the year to share their faith and build relationships with one another.

Reconciliation

During Advent, students in grades 3-8 will attend reconciliation services. During Lent, students in grades 2-8 will attend reconciliation services.

Religion Curriculum

Religion is a required course at every grade level and includes participation in graded coursework. All St. Margaret students, regardless of their personal faith affiliation, must attend religion classes, devotions, liturgical and prayer services. Students also participate in a family life program each year, which educates the students regarding the church's teachings on family, marriage, and health. Growing with God: Safe and Sacred is an innovative, multi-faceted family life program used in conjunction with the Religion Curriculum for students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

Retreats

Faculty participates in a yearly retreat and students in different grades participate in various retreat activities throughout the school year.

Sacraments

St. Margaret Parish facilitates student preparation for sacraments. Contact the parish office or refer to the Sunday Bulletin for more information.

School Liturgies

At St. Margaret School, faculty and students attend Mass on a weekly basis. Students actively participate in Mass through various roles such as altar servers, readers, music ministry, etc. The middle school campus celebrates Mass on Wednesdays at 8:30am in the Mission, and the elementary school campus celebrates Mass on Thursdays at 8:30am in the Church. All baptized Catholics will participate in the sacramental life of the church.

Faculty and students attend Mass on Holy Days: All Saints Day, Immaculate Conception, and Ash Wednesday. Holy Day Masses will be held on both campuses: middle school at 8:30am and elementary school at 10:00am.

Scripture of the Month

At St. Margaret School, we have a tradition of highlighting a "Scripture of the Month" to enrich our spiritual lives and strengthen our community's faith. Each month, a specific scripture passage is chosen to reflect our values and guide our thoughts and actions. This scripture is integrated into our daily activities, discussions, and reflections, fostering a deeper connection with our faith and encouraging us to live out the teachings in our everyday lives.

Service Projects/Outreach

St. Margaret School is active in community outreach. We dedicate time each month as a school family to provide support to our community and others through outreach projects and service.

September Choose Hope Baby Items Collection

October "Socktober" Sock Collection

November Parish Thanksgiving Food/Used Coat Drive

December MS Advent Families/ ES Toy Collection

January Pajamas for Casey Cares/Cancer Awareness

February/March Canned Goods/Parish Lenten Paper Goods Drive

March 2nd-12th The Lions Club Used Eyeglasses Collection

April/May Collection of New School Supplies

ACADEMICS

Curriculum

St. Margaret School follows the Archdiocesan Curriculum standards, instructional minutes and the regulations of the Maryland State Department of Education for non-public schools. Courses are updated on a rotating basis.

<https://sites.google.com/archbaltschools.org/curriculum-parent-portal?usp=sharing>

Academic Integrity Policy

The Academic Integrity Policy includes consequences for cheating and plagiarism (including work that used Generative AI/ChatGPT to plagiarize).

St. Margaret School students are to foster and maintain honesty, trust, responsibility, and academic excellence. All members of the school community, including students, parents, and faculty, must be dedicated to this vision. This policy is established to create a positive learning environment and help build students' moral character. The community of St. Margaret School expects a commitment of academic integrity from all students. Students should produce and submit their own work and refuse to ignore it when they are aware that others do not produce and submit their own work. If a student believes an act of cheating or plagiarism has occurred, the student is encouraged to talk to the teacher directly and promptly.

The following actions are considered examples of academic dishonesty:

- Discussing test questions or answers with someone who has yet to take the test
- Using unauthorized aides such as notes or a “cheat sheet” on a test or quiz
- Giving assistance to another student during a test or quiz
- Copying another student’s work or allowing another student to copy your work
- “Recycling” work from another course
- Copying information from a source without giving proper citation
- Paraphrasing information from a source without giving proper citation

If a middle school student is believed to have cheated or plagiarized, the student will be asked about the assignment in question. If a teacher is dissatisfied with the response the matter will be referred to the assistant principal. If academic dishonesty is determined, a zero will be given on the assignment and the student will receive a detention.

St. Margaret School reserves the right to use its system of disciplinary consequences as a response to behavior that occurs outside of the school day which still violates stated rules for appropriate conduct at St. Margaret School, including online activity. It is expected that St. Margaret School students act in a way that proudly represents the Catholic values of respectfulness, responsibility, and kindness that are inherent to our school culture even when they are in public or at other non-school events.

Students in preK–grade 8 are not permitted to use generative artificial intelligence (AI) at this time.

Textbooks

Savvas Envision Math Series

Sadlier Vocabulary Series

Sadlier Grammar Series

Sadlier Phonics to Reading Grades K-2

Literacy Footprints

Loyola Press Growing With God

Language of Literature

Follett D’Nealian Handwriting

Science ES Harcourt

Science MS Savvas- Elevate Science (Earth Science 6th, Life Science 7th, Physical Science 8th)

SS ES McGraw Hill- Impact Social Studies (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th), Gibbs Smith- Maryland: An American Adventure 1450-1790 & 1780-present (4th)

SS MS Benzinger- All Ye Lands & The American Venture

Spanish ES- The Spanish Workbook for Grades 1, 2 & 3, EnVivo Spanish Level 1 (4th Grade),

EnVivo Spanish Level 2 (5th Grade)

Perfection Learning Spanish (Grades 6-8)

Grading Policy

All archdiocesan K-8 schools shall follow this grading policy to ensure consistent, transparent, and fair grading of students' academic performance. The purpose is to ensure consistent, transparent grading practices that accurately reflect students' academic performance and mastery of the curriculum.

Overview of Grading and Reporting

Grades serve as a tool to measure and communicate a student's academic performance and mastery of the curriculum. They provide valuable feedback to students, parents, and educators about the student's understanding of the material, areas of strength, and areas needing improvement. Grades help guide instructional decisions, support student learning, and ensure accountability in the educational process. By reflecting academic achievement, grades aim to motivate students to strive for excellence and foster a culture of continuous learning and growth.

Kindergarten-Grade 2

In Kindergarten through Grade 2, grading is standards-based and reflects students' developmental readiness and progression toward mastery. The focus is on growth, skill acquisition, and demonstration of understanding through developmentally appropriate learning experiences. Progress is reported using performance levels. (Consistently Developing, Making Progress, Support Needed, and Not Assessed at this time).

Assessment Practices

Assessment methods may include: teacher observation, classwork and student discussions, work samples and portfolios, checklists and rubrics aligned to standards, formal quizzes and tests.

Formal quizzes and tests may be administered in developmentally appropriate ways to assess student understanding. While traditional numerical weighting is not applied in Grades K-2, assessment results are used to inform instructional decisions and report progress toward grade-level students.

Homework

Homework is used to reinforce skills already taught and may be graded when appropriate.

Special Subjects

Participation, engagement, and skill demonstration are used to assess subjects like Art, Music, and Physical Education.

Behavior

Behavior is reported separately and is not factored into academic performance indicators.

Grades 3-8

Components of Grading

Grades should primarily reflect the student's academic mastery of the subject content. Schools will determine the category weighting within these ranges and will communicate school-specific grading practices.

Content Knowledge (50%)

This category will represent the student's mastery of core subject content.

- **Classwork:** Assignments completed during class that show understanding of the material. These assignments should be graded for accuracy, comprehension, and depth of thought.
- **Practice Activities:** These include tasks that help reinforce learning, such as drills, exercises, and review activities. These activities should be integrated with class content and help students solidify their understanding.
- **Tests and Quizzes:** Frequent quizzes and formal tests will assess student retention and comprehension of key concepts. Quizzes assess smaller chunks of content, while tests cover larger units or major concepts. Tests will weigh heavily in this category, given their comprehensive nature.

Assessment of Learning (20%)

This category includes more formal assessments such as larger tests and projects that evaluate how well students have mastered the material.

- **Projects:** Assignments that require students to apply learned concepts in more complex, real-world situations. These projects should be assessed on both the process (e.g., research, organization) and the final product (e.g., depth of analysis, creativity).
- **Major Tests:** These will account for a significant portion of this category, reflecting a student's overall understanding of unit content.

Skills Application and Critical Thinking (20%)

This category assesses how students apply their learning in complex or real-world contexts. It encourages critical thinking and problem-solving, going beyond simple recall of facts.

- **Problem-Solving Assignments:** These include tasks where students need to analyze, synthesize, and apply learned concepts to new or unfamiliar situations. Examples include science experiments, math problems requiring creative solutions, or essay questions that ask students to analyze a situation.

- Critical Thinking Projects: These might include essays, presentations, or research projects that require students to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.

Homework and Practice (10%)

Homework and in-class activities should provide students with opportunities to reinforce and apply skills and concepts that have already been taught. Homework completed outside of school should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and should not introduce new content.

Practice activities, completed during the school day, such as exit tickets, fluency drills, or review exercises, support ongoing learning and skill development. Both contribute to a deeper understanding of the material.

Homework: Homework assignments will be graded for completion and may be graded for accuracy if the learning concepts are previously taught concepts. These assignments should provide students with opportunities to practice and review the content discussed in class.

Homework

Homework is assigned as a reinforcement or extension of our daily program. Homework may be available on the Google classroom/teacher website, but parents should check with what is in your child's planner. Assigned homework must be completed, and it is the parent's responsibility to supervise the homework. As the student becomes older, the major responsibility should shift to the student. Yet, even with older students, some parental supervision is expected. **Emphasis should be placed on study as well as written work.** Each grade level establishes its own expectations and rules regarding homework. Individual teachers define their expectations in September. Homework includes written work and studying and the time to complete the expected work will vary depending on the work being done in the classroom and the expectations of the class.

If a student is absent, it is his/her responsibility to make up missed work and/or assignments.

Parents who take vacation time with their children over and above what is provided in the school calendar must assume responsibility for the work that is missed. **Teachers are not able to compile work ahead of time for the student. Work/tests must be completed in the same amount of time as the days missed regardless of the reason for the absence.**

Practice Assignments: Practice assignments structured tasks completed during class that reinforce previously taught concepts. These may include exit tickets, spelling tests, math fact drills, or other review activities that support skill development and content retention.

Behavior

Behavior should not be included in academic grades. It is essential that grades accurately reflect a student's academic performance, rather than their behavior.

Subjects and Activities Requiring Participation

There are courses and activities in which demonstration of mastery through participation is the only way to assess skills and application. These include, but are not limited to:

- Music: Participation in performances, rehearsals, and practice sessions is essential to demonstrate mastery of musical skills.
- Art: Active participation in art projects, critiques, and exhibitions is necessary to showcase artistic abilities.
- Class Discussion: Engaging in class discussions helps demonstrate understanding and the ability to articulate thoughts clearly.
- Physical Education: Participating in physical activities, sports, and fitness assessments is crucial for demonstrating physical skills and fitness levels.

Participation in these activities may be graded according to expectations for the course or activity. This ensures that students are actively engaged and effectively demonstrate their level of mastery.

Weighting of Grading Categories

Category	Weighting (%)
Content Knowledge (Classwork, Practice Activities, Tests, Quizzes)	50%
Assessments of Learning (Major Tests, Projects)	20%
Skills Application and Critical Thinking (Projects, Problem-Solving)	20%
Homework/Practice Activities (Practice Activities, Review)	10%

Trimester Report Card Grade Keys

Trimester Grade Key Grades 3-8	
A+	97-100
A	93-96

B+	89-92
B	85-88
C+	80-84
C	75-79
D	70-74
E	69 and below

Trimester Grade Key Grades K-2	
Consistently Developing	93-100
Making Progress	75-92
Support Needed	74 and below
NA	Not Assessed at this time

Trimester Grade Key Special 3-8	
Consistently Developing	93-100
Making Progress	75-92
Needs Improvement	74 and below
NA	Not Assessed at this time

Report Cards and Progress Reports

In the Archdiocese of Baltimore, students in pre-kindergarten through grade 8 will receive report cards three times a year, at the conclusion of each trimester. In addition, the school will send progress reports home for grades 3-8 during the middle of each trimester.

2025–2026 Interim and Report Card Dates

Trimester	Interims	End of Trimester	Report Cards
T1	Oct. 8	Nov. 14	Nov. 24
T2	Jan. 21	Feb. 27	Mar. 9
T3	Apr. 22	—	Grade 8: June 1 Preschool/Kindergarten June 4 Grades 1–7: June 10

Honor Roll Policy

All Archdiocesan schools shall honor academic achievement with an Honor Roll based on specific criteria. The purpose is to recognize and encourage high academic achievement and positive contributions to the learning environment in accordance with the values of the Catholic archdiocese.

All Archdiocesan K-8 Schools that recognize Honor Roll students must follow the minimum requirements below, and these guidelines will be communicated in the Student Handbook.

Students in grades 6-8 who demonstrate high academic achievement and who positively impact the learning environment are placed on Honor Roll based on the following criteria:

Principal's Honor Roll

Academic Achievement: All A's in core subjects.

Special Classes: Satisfactory or better in all special classes.

Standards, Effort, and Conduct: Satisfactory or better, including unstructured time.

Second Honors

Academic Achievement: All A's and B's (more A's than B's) in core subjects.

Special Classes: Satisfactory or better in all special classes.

Standards, Effort, and Conduct: Satisfactory or better, including unstructured time.

Students in grade 5 will be recognized for outstanding academic performance (Honor Roll) at the end of the third trimester only.

Promotion Requirements

Students are promoted to the next grade upon successful completion of all subjects each year.

Retention

Students who do not successfully complete the required educational program may be retained at the current grade level. This decision is made by the principal in consultation with the parents after following the timeline described below.

Teachers should communicate with parents on a regular basis regarding the child's progress. By mid-February, the teacher, principal, parents, (and student) review the student's work performance to date and discuss his/her educational needs for the remainder of the year and the possibility of failure and/or retention. This meeting is followed by a written communication to the parents reviewing the content of the meeting, including the educational plan. Students may also be retained for severe attendance and tardy issues during the school year, as determined by the school in consultation with the Department of Catholic Schools.

Graduation Requirements

Students in eighth grade who successfully complete the course of study as outlined by the Archdiocese of Baltimore, will be awarded a diploma at the end of the school year. An eighth-grade student must be in good academic, financial and behavior standing in order to participate in the end of the year graduation activities. Graduation from St. Margaret School is a privilege. Proper behavior at all 8th grade events including the Graduation ceremony is expected by all students, parents and guests. All obligations must be in order, i.e. tuition paid, EDC payments, school books/materials returned. If financial obligations are not paid in full and/or academic requirements are not met, diplomas and report cards will not be issued.

Extracurricular Activity Participation

Students participating in extracurricular activities (clubs, sports, student council, creative arts, etc.) must maintain academic and behavioral requirements as outlined by the club moderator and administration.

Power School Access

It is also the parents' responsibility to obtain their passwords for PowerSchool and to monitor grades for their children in grades 3-8. Parents will be contacted by the teacher

by mid-trimester with an interim report. In some cases, where there is a significant drop in grades or performance, a conference may be required.

Communication

The school uses a weekly electronic newsletter, Principal's Post, to share information to the entire community. The Principal's Post is distributed on Thursdays, around 5:00 p.m.. In addition to the Principal's Post, regular email communications are sent in conjunction with homeroom teachers and room parents to provide details about information specific to the grade level and/or subject.

In the best interest of students, the school welcomes and encourages positive verbal and written communication between parents/guardians and teachers. Whenever a situation occurs that causes concern, the issue should be addressed first at the level at which the situation arose. Therefore, parents/guardians should first contact the teacher involved, and then if necessary the school administration. Teachers and administrators will respond to parent emails or phone calls within 48 hours, but are not obligated to reply to messages or emails over the weekend, in the evening, or during holidays. Trimester 1 conferences will be offered and scheduled at least two weeks prior to the planned dates. Out of consideration for the personal family time of teachers and the administration, phone calls to their homes and cell phones are not permitted.

Student Services

Resource teachers are available for students who are in need of special skill reinforcement. A guidance program has been developed for all classes, kindergarten through eighth grade. A counselor is available on each campus to assist students as needed. (ES: [Mrs. Curran mcurran@smsch.org](mailto:Mcurran@smsch.org) MS: pmessar@smsch.org) The health rooms are staffed by a registered nurse on each campus. (ES: ecottens@smsch.org MS: mporter@smsch.org)

Learning Support and the Student Advocacy Team (SAT) Process

If a child is not progressing academically, the school may ask the parents/guardians to initiate, or the parents/guardians may initiate on their own the process to request a professional consultation and/or evaluation through the local public school system.

In the public school system, the evaluative process is generally called the IEP Process (Individual Educational Plan) and begins when a parent/guardian calls 'Child Find'. Following the initial phone call to the Local Educational Agency (LEA) Child Find, parents/guardians are given an initial meeting date within 30 days.

At this initial meeting, parents/guardians and school faculty are invited to share their concerns, present information, and discuss whether an evaluation will take place. Student Advocacy Team members and particularly the student's teacher, are a vital part of the process.

If an evaluation is deemed warranted and takes place, recommendations and an academic plan are developed by the Student Advocacy Team and given to the parents/guardians at the summative meeting following the academic evaluation.

If such a plan is developed and the test results determine that there is a need for accommodations and/or modifications within a student's learning environment, the school administrator will consult with the parents/guardians to determine what accommodations, resources, plans, and school placements may be implemented.

Field Trips

Field trips are considered an integral part of the school's educational program and a valuable learning experience for students. Field trips are scheduled at various times during the school year. In advance of the trip, a permission form, required by the Archdiocesan Department of Catholic Schools, is sent home. A student will be permitted to attend the trip only if the permission form is signed by the parent/guardian and returned to the teacher by the specified date along with any fee.

If, for some extraordinary reason, a student is unable to participate, the student is expected to attend school on that day and fees must still be paid since the rates we are quoted reflect total participation. Work will be supplied by the teacher(s), and the student will be assigned a classroom in which to work under the supervision of a staff member. If a student is unable to attend because of illness, we cannot promise a refund. Parents must notify the teacher if a child will not participate in the field trip experience. Students who are kept home from the trip will be marked absent.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are encouraged to participate as chaperones on field trips as the need arises. However, because of safety and liability factors, preschool siblings and other school-age siblings are not allowed. The school does not permit parents not selected as chaperones to join the group at the trip destination as this creates confusion. All chaperones are required to comply with the school's policies, to adhere to the Archdiocesan Child and Youth Protection policies, and to complete VIRTUS training in advance of the field trip. Any parents who are driving on field trips will have additional requirements.

ADMISSIONS

Application Process

Students must be in good standing (financial, academic, and behavioral) to be accepted into a Catholic school. Parents or guardians must provide pertinent information, including required

forms for admission as well as additional information that may assist the school staff with your child(ren).

Admission to St. Margaret School is based on the following priority of acceptance provided that there are OPENINGS in the level requested: (1) children of staff members, (2) siblings of current students, (3) all others. Siblings who are on a Waiting List during the previous school year will be placed on the Waiting List the following year – in the order in which they are on the current list.

Documentation needed for application

- Completed application form
- Student's birth certificate
- Student's baptismal certificate
- Records of student immunization and health data
- Previous school records
- Standardized testing scores if applicable
- Letter of recommendation from prior school (grades 6-8)

Placement

Students are initially placed using the results of an admissions test, teacher evaluation (from previous school), permanent records including report cards, and standardized test results.

- PK 3 & 4 Program: A child must be three or four years respectively of age by September 1st. The 3 & 4 year old must be toilet trained. "Pull-ups" are not allowed.
- Kindergarten Program: A child must be five years of age by September 1st and take the Brigance Assessment Test.
- First Grade: A child must be six years of age by September 1st. All transfer students will present a recent report card and take a placement test.
- Students entering grades 2-7 will take a placement test.

All prospective students will tour, shadow, and complete an entrance interview with administration prior to consideration for acceptance.

Probationary Period

In order to make sure that the school is a good fit for the student, all new students will be given a one-year probationary period and monitored for academic progress and behavior during this time. Parents will be notified throughout the year if the student's actions and academics are not meeting expectations. If during this time the school is unable to meet the needs of the student or the student demonstrates an inability or unwillingness to comply with school policies, the parents will be asked by the principal to place their child in another school. Such recommendations would only occur after continued communication and conferences with the parents and school administration.

High School Admissions and Visitation Policy

Eighth grade students are allowed up to three days for shadow visits to local area Catholic High Schools. Students will be marked absent since they will not be in the building.

Non-Discrimination Statement

The State of Maryland requires the following statement in the Student Handbook:

“It is the policy of the State of Maryland that all public and publicly funded schools and school programs operate in compliance with:

- (1) Title VI of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964; and
- (2) Title 26, Subtitle 7 of the Education Article of the Maryland Code, which states that public and publicly funded schools and programs may not:
 - (i) Discriminate against a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability;
 - (ii) Refuse enrollment of a prospective student, expel a current student, or withhold privileges from a current student, a prospective student, or the parent or guardian of a current or prospective student because of an individual’s race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability; or
 - (iii) Discipline, invoke a penalty against, or take any other retaliatory action against a student or parent or guardian of a student who files a complaint alleging that the program or school discriminated against the student, regardless of the outcome of the complaint.”

The State of Maryland does not require a nonpublic school that is religiously affiliated to enroll, retain, or extend privileges to a student or prospective student who does not meet the usual and regular qualifications, requirements, and standards of the program or school or to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with the program or school’s religious or moral teachings provided that the denial, rule, regulation, or policy is not based on discrimination on the grounds of race, ethnicity, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

Requests for reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability may be directed to Mrs. Curran (mcurran@smsch.org) at the ES and Mrs. Messaris (pmessaris@smsch.org) at the MS.

Religion is required for each year a student attends St. Margaret School. All students enrolled in St. Margaret School must attend religion classes and services. We will always teach and act consistent with the tenets of the Catholic Church.

ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Standardized Testing

All Archdiocesan schools administer the achievement test designated by the Department of Catholic Schools in prescribed grades.

Pre-kindergarten 3, Pre-kindergarten 4, and Kindergarten students are administered the BRIGANCE developmental screening in the fall and/or spring.

Elementary school students in grades 2-8 are administered the NWEA MAP Assessment three times a year to measure growth. Grades 3, 5, and 7 also take the Science Assessment each Spring. Parents are given feedback about their child's performance at the end of each trimester.

Assessment of Child/Youth Religious Education (ACRE)

All students in grades 5 and 8 are given the ACRE (Assessment of Child/Youth Religious Education) the spring of each school year. This assessment gives information for growth to each school as it assesses how well the religious education program is forming Christian disciples. This is a school assessment, and no individual student scores are given.

ATTENDANCE AND STUDENT RECORDS

Absence

Regular attendance is considered essential for learning at St. Margaret School. Students need to develop the work habits and responsibilities required of all of us as we go through life. When a student is absent from school, a parent/legal guardian must telephone the school offices. Parents must call or email the main office in the morning each day the student is absent. All absences and tardiness become part of a student's permanent record.

Absence from school during the academic year due to family vacations is strongly discouraged. There are regularly scheduled vacations and holidays in the school calendar, which is based on mandated instructional days by the State of Maryland and the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Please check these ahead of time when scheduling trips or doctor's appointments. Permission may not be given by any teacher or administrator for students to be absent for extra vacations or holidays. These decisions are the responsibility of the parents.

Prolonged unauthorized absences can and will affect students' grades and academic standing. The school cannot be responsible for the consequences of these absences. The teacher's instruction cannot be replicated. Missed work and assignments may only be obtained upon return and provided that missed work assignments may not be available for all absences, as they are dependent upon the nature of the work. Teachers are not responsible for creating alternative assignments or experiences for absent students. Students will have the same number of days they are absent to complete their missed work.

Students who are absent from school may not participate in any after school or evening school sponsored events such as sports, dances, and possibly field trips. After 7 student absences in a trimester, a parent, teacher and administrator conference needs to take place to discuss the potential educational impact on the students academic standing.

After an absence and he/she returns to school, the student must bring a written note to his/her homeroom teacher signed by a parent/legal guardian stating the reason for absence. The school reserves the right to require a doctor's note for absences due to illness or injury or need for assessment/evaluation. A child may not return to school until he/she is well enough to participate in all school activities including recess.

If a student will be out of school for an extended period, whether continuous or intermittent, parents should consult with the administration regarding appropriate support of the student in fulfilling the school curriculum or alternative arrangements such as home and hospital services through the local public school district.

Per the Archdiocese of Baltimore policy, a student marked absent for more than 20 instructional days in one school year is considered excessively absent and may result in the student being retained. The administration reserves the right to request a conference with parents of students with excessive absences and tardies at any point during the school year to make parents and students aware of the possible consequences of not attending school on a consistent basis. Child Protective Services (CPS) may be called due to excessive absences.

Tardiness

Tardiness (coming to school late or leaving school early) is another action that affects a student's readiness to learn. Coming in and/or leaving early, not only disrupts the educational learning for your child, but also those of other students in the class. Parents will be notified in writing for 5 or more tardies and a conference may be requested by the administrative team to address the issue and consequences.

Truancy

Students in Catholic Schools must comply with Maryland State law concerning compulsory attendance. The law requires regular attendance during the entire school year. Students are held accountable for time(s) they are absent from school. A principal may excuse a student for a necessary absence.

Regular school attendance is expected in order for students to achieve their academic potential. Each student's attendance is carefully recorded and permanently retained. Therefore, absence for reasons such as a vacation is strongly discouraged. Excessive absence has a serious impact on the student's academic performance.

The purpose of compulsory attendance is to ensure the continuous development and progress of the child's education. Unlawful absences are considered truant. The school informs parents that

if truancy persists, the public authorities will be notified.

Truancy is defined as a student absenting him/herself from school without parent/legal guardian permission, or leaving school grounds without permission during the school day. Truancy may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion and may be reported to the Maryland State Department of Education.

Lateness and Assignments

Any student arriving after the first bell is considered late and must report to the office for a late slip. Tardiness is entered on a student's permanent record. It is the responsibility of the student to check with the homeroom teacher to receive the necessary communication or work that may have been missed due to lateness.

Early Departure and Late Arrivals

The school discourages early departures and requests that families arrange medical and dental appointments, etc. after school hours, on early dismissal days, or during vacation periods. Check the calendar for days when school is not in session.

On a regular school day, students may not be picked up for early dismissal after 2:00 pm at the middle school and after 2:20 pm at the elementary school. On an early dismissal day, students may not be picked up after 11:15 am at the middle school and after 11:45 at the elementary school.

A student should be counted present for the full day if in attendance for 4 or more hours. A student is counted present for a half day if in attendance for at least 2 hours but less than 4 hours. Children leaving after 1:00 pm will be marked as leaving early.

School Hours

GRADES	NORMAL DAY	EARLY DISMISSAL	2 HOURS LATE
6-8	7:40am - 2:30 pm	7:40am - 11:45pm	9:40am - 2:30 pm
1-5	8:05am -2:55 pm	8:05am - 12:05pm	10:05am - 2:55 pm
Kindergarten	8:05am- 2:45pm	8:05am-12:00pm	10:05am-2:45pm
PreK3	8:20am - 11:20am	8:20am - 11:20am	10:20am -11:45am
PreK4 (½ day)	8:15am -11:20am	8:15 -11:20am	10:15am -11:45am
PreK 4 (Full day)	8:15am - 2:20 pm	8:15am - 11:20am	10:15am -2:20 pm

Early Dismissal Days for 2025-2026 and policy for late pick up

August 25, 2025	January 30, 2026
August 29, 2025	April 2, 2026
September 18, 2025	May 8, 2026
October 31, 2025	May 22, 2026
December 19, 2025	June 10, 2026

Families will be charged \$5.00 for students that are picked up after 15 minutes of the posted dismissal time. Afterwards, students will be monitored in the main office on each campus by administration. Exceptions will be made for emergency situations.

Location and Access to Student Records

Student records are maintained in the school office or a designated administrative area. Access to records is governed by the Records Policy.

Records Policy

St. Margaret School complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. In general, FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to education records. (The rights granted to parents under FERPA automatically pass to the student when the student turns 18 or enrolls in college.) These rights and related procedures of St. Margaret School are as follows:

- Parents have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the School. Parents should submit to the Principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School will make arrangements for access and notify the parent of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- Parents have the right to request that the School correct records they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights. Parents who wish to request an amendment of the student's records should write to Assistant Principals or Principal and clearly identify the part of the record they believe is inaccurate or misleading and the information they believe should be included in a corrected record. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested, the School will notify the parent of the decision and the parent's right to request a hearing.
- Parents generally have the right to consent in writing to disclosures of information from a student's education record. However, there are certain exceptions to the consent requirement, including disclosures under the following conditions:
 - To School officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the information. A school official is a person employed by the School or the Archdiocese as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff); a person or company with whom the School has contracted to provide a service (e.g., attorney); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his/her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his/her professional responsibilities or duties to the School.

- To other schools to which a student is transferring.
- In connection with financial aid under certain circumstances.
- To specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes.
- To organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school.
- To accrediting organizations.
- In order to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- To appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies.

The School also may disclose appropriately designated “directory information” without written consent unless a parent objects in writing. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the School to include this type of information in certain publications. Examples of such publications include a playbill, showing the student's role in a drama production; the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs; and sports activity sheets.

The School has designated the following as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Honors and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level

Parents who do not want the School to disclose the above directory information without their prior written consent must notify the Principal in writing within one week upon receipt of the handbook.

- A log must be maintained of each request for access to and each disclosure of educational record information other than disclosure to parents or students 18 or older or school officials. The log should contain the name of the person(s), the date, and the legitimate interests the person had in requesting or obtaining the information.
- Parents have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by St. Margaret School to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-8520.

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENT BEHAVIOR POLICIES

Statement on Philosophy of Discipline

St. Margaret School strives to develop responsible, courteous, self-disciplined boys and girls whose pride in themselves, their parents, their school, and their community is reflected in their behavior. The development of such young people requires a consistent practice of thoughtful, responsible behavior during these formative years. Students are made aware that they are an integral part of the faith community and that their actions affect themselves as well as the entire community. The ultimate purpose is to develop true Christian character and a sense of responsibility; to establish an atmosphere conducive to academic excellence; and to protect the welfare of the individual, as well as the school community.

Students may be disciplined for conduct that occurs on school premises or at school-sponsored events, or for other conduct that adversely affects the interests or reputation of the school regardless of where the conduct occurs.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has implemented an evidence and research-based Anti-bullying program, Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS). PBIS is a comprehensive framework in which schools focus on our Christ-centered teachings and values to create nurturing, safe, positive, and supportive learning environments. Consistent school-wide expectations are visible throughout the school and students' positive behavior is acknowledged and celebrated. The PBIS framework adopts behavioral interventions into an integrated continuum that is designed to enhance academics and behavioral outcomes for every student.

Our Catholic Identity guides our vision and our behavior expectations. Our school wide theme is "St. Margaret's School has GRIT." - G (God), R (Respect and Responsibility), I (Integrity), and T (Teamwork). GRIT Matrices are created to increase positive behavior in various locations throughout the school day for students.

Preschool Discipline Policy

Our Code of Conduct is based upon the Christian values of love, respect, and forgiveness. The well-being and safety of each child guides our discipline procedures. When a child's actions interfere with the learning environment or may result in injury to self or others, the teacher intervenes. Strategies, such as distraction, redirection, or time-out are used by the teacher or aide to improve the situation. By giving choices and offering experiences in problem solving our preschool program provides a learning environment that encourages self-discipline.

Elementary and Middle School Discipline Policy

Our Code of Conduct is based upon the Christian values of respect, love, and forgiveness. Our school community believes every child has the right to learn and every teacher has the right to teach. Therefore, actions that interfere with the learning environment result in a consequence.

Conflicts are a normal and healthy part of living and growing. We encourage students to handle conflicts and not to avoid them. The goal is reconciliation. The Counselors and/or the

Administration will implement acceptable conflict resolution techniques to work towards a solution.

Discipline is a process, not a single action or statement. The ultimate goal is to have students become self-disciplined individuals who know and accept personal boundaries, standards, and expectations. Self-disciplined persons are motivated to do the right thing whether observed or not. Our goal is to have students accept responsibility for their actions and mature into self-disciplined Christians.

Behavior

To maintain a positive learning environment and standards that are consistent with our Christian philosophy, it is essential that students exhibit a sense of responsibility and respect for themselves as well as others. Listed below are some behaviors that are unacceptable and may warrant disciplinary action.

- Rudeness
- Vulgarity
- Disrespect in manner and/or language to each other, including peers, teachers, faculty, and staff
- Rowdiness
- Using the property of others without permission
- Dishonesty
- Failure to have necessary supplies for classwork
- Disruptive Behavior
- Dangerous Play
- Dress Code violations
- Gum chewing
- Harassment of any kind by word or action but not limited to digital harassment
- Smoking/using matches/vaping/gummies
- Willful destruction of school property
- Leaving school property without permission
- Fighting or threats of violence
- Theft or extortion
- Possession or consumption of any drug or look-alike drug while at school or while attending a school function
- Possession or consumption of alcohol while at school or while attending a school function
- Possession of knives/weapons or look-alike knives/weapons
- Possession of pornographic material(s) including distribution of both physical and digital
- Public displays of affection

After school activities, while riding on buses to field trips or other school or parish sponsored activities are included in the definition of on-campus conduct.

When it comes to social media, whether posted during school hours, and on school property, or while occurring outside of the school property, if the behavior creates a substantial disruption, the school can take action relative to support the school environment.

Generally, the teacher will deal with infractions. Should circumstances warrant, the parent and/or the Administration involved will be consulted. In cases of serious or repeated violations, students may be subject to disciplinary suspension or expulsion. The school's fair procedure to be used in cases of possible suspension or expulsion is as outlined in Policy SS 2.0; SS 2.1; SS 2.2.

Demerits

Demerits are intended as a communication between the teacher and parents that a student is not demonstrating the quality behavior expected of a St. Margaret student. It has no consequences beyond serving as a record of communication between the school and family regarding inappropriate behavior and as a warning that repeated infractions will result in a detention. Demerits are cumulative over the trimester and are expunged annually. Demerits are not included in the student's permanent record and are not sent to schools following departure from SMS.

Detentions

A detention is the consequence of three demerits or repeated inappropriate behavior and is intended as a behavioral intervention to prevent future disciplinary infractions. Detentions are cumulative over the year and are expunged annually. Detentions are not included in the student's permanent record and notice of them is not sent to schools following departure from SMS.

Suspension

Repeated violations of the code of conduct or an action of a serious nature may result in a student suspension. After careful consideration of all factors, the principal will determine if a suspension is merited and for how many days. The principal will exercise his/her discretion whether the suspension should be served in-school or at home. Any student on suspension may not attend school functions during that time period. While on suspension, the student is still responsible for missed work. After the specified amount of time for suspension, which shall not exceed three consecutive school days, (unless approved in consultation with the superintendent) the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet with the Administration for reinstatement. The Administration reserves the right to determine the conditions for reinstatement.

Expulsion

The principal with the pastor and the Department of Catholic Schools shall determine if any infraction of this section exists. The decision shall be based upon reasonable cause. An expelled student forfeits all privileges of the St. Margaret School student. The Administrator reserves the right not to re-admit an expelled student at a later date. If a student is to be expelled, the student is entitled to a prompt review procedure established by the Department of Catholic Schools. A written request for review must be submitted to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools within 10 working days of the notice of intent to expel. In some cases, parents are given the option to withdraw the student in lieu of expulsion.

The school reserves the right to deny attendance to anyone whose behavior is contrary to the teachings and ideals of the school or whose behavior or attitude is disruptive to the functioning of the student body.

Search and Seizure

St. Margaret School reserves the right to search school property (e.g. lockers, desks), a student's belongings, and areas under the student's control in order to enforce school policies, rules and regulations or otherwise preserve a safe and orderly learning environment.

Bullying Policy

Bullying, harassment, or intimidation (as defined below) of any student is prohibited in all Archdiocese of Baltimore Schools. Retaliation or reprisal against anyone who reports such behaviors or participates in an investigation of a report is also prohibited. Such behaviors are contrary to school life in a Christ-centered community, which respects the dignity and uniqueness of all of God's children. To foster a school environment where all students are educated in a safe and caring atmosphere, all Archdiocesan schools will follow established procedures for prevention and intervention, and response.

Harassment of students on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, and sexual orientation are also addressed under the *Archdiocesan Student Harassment Policy* in the Code of Conduct. Suspected abuse or neglect of students is addressed under the *Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*.

"Bullying, harassment, or intimidation" means intentional conduct, including written, verbal, or physical conduct or an intentional electronic communication that:

- a. Creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance or with a student's physical or psychological well-being and:
 - i. Is motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or
 - ii. Is sexual in nature; or
 - iii. Is threatening or seriously intimidating; and
- b. Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Electronic technology means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including a telephone, cellular phone, computer, pager, etc.

Retaliation means an act of reprisal or revenge, i.e., getting back at a person for an act he/she committed (such as reporting misconduct).

The principal or designee will notify the parent/guardian of the alleged victim of a report of bullying, harassment or intimidation within three (3) business days after the incident is reported.

The principal or designee will notify the parent/guardian of the alleged perpetrator of a report of bullying, harassment or intimidation within five (5) business days after the incident is reported

Reporting forms are located in the main office and on the school's website. [REPORTING FORM](#)

Harassment Policy

Harassment or abuse of any kind is not acceptable behavior in St. Margaret School and will result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension/expulsion.

It is the policy of the Archdiocese to prohibit harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or protected activity (i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in the complaint process) in its education programs and activities. Each Catholic school shall adhere to this policy with respect to students. (Employees are similarly protected from harassment by a separate Archdiocesan policy.) A school is not required to adopt any rule, regulation, or policy that conflicts with its religious or moral teachings.

A. Scope

This policy applies to all students in Archdiocesan elementary, middle and secondary schools. The Archdiocese neither condones nor tolerates harassment of students at school, at school-related activities or functions, or in any school-related setting. Harassment of students, whether engaged in by other students, teachers, administrators, or others, is prohibited. Violation of this Policy is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or suspension or expulsion from school, depending on the nature and severity of the offense and the individual's disciplinary record.

B. Prohibited Conduct

- a. For purposes of this Policy, "harassment" means verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, disability or handicap, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, or protected activity, that:
 - i. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment;

ii. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or

iii. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's educational opportunities.

b. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile acts that relate to race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, handicap or disability, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation. "Sexual" harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for educational decisions or has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

C. Procedure

a. Any person who believes that a student is being subjected to harassment should immediately report the harassment to any one or more of the following individuals: the student's teacher, the principal of the school, the Superintendent of Catholic Schools. A bullying/harassment form should be filled out.

b. Individuals are encouraged to report harassment early, before it becomes severe or pervasive, so that preventive action can be taken. All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly and impartially, and will remain confidential to the extent possible.

c. Any retaliation, reprisals, or intimidation, whether by the alleged harasser or from another source, directed toward the complaining party or anyone else as a result of the filing or investigation of a harassment complaint is considered a serious violation of this Policy and should be reported immediately.

d. Once the investigation is complete, the school will take immediate and appropriate corrective action when it determines that this Policy has been violated. The complaining party and the complained-of party will be advised of the investigation's findings and conclusions. A report of the findings will be forwarded to the Department of Catholic Schools.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Tuition Schedule

Tuition 2025-2026		
PRE-3 (2 day) half day		\$ 2,625
PRE-3-4 (3 day) half day		\$ 3,935
PRE-4 (3 day) full day		\$ 4,930
PRE-4 (5 day) half day		\$ 6,555
PRE-4 (full day) - 8th grade	per child	\$ 8,230
Discount for 2nd Child *		\$ (1,100)
Discount for 3rd Child*		\$ (2,200)
Discount for 4th Child *		\$ (4,400)

*Sibling discounts apply to students in full five day preschool through grade 8.

Families choose from two tuition payment options: payment in full of all tuition and fees on or before June 15 with a 2% net tuition discount, or an interest-free payment plan with ten equal monthly installments from July through April via direct debit. The 2% discount is applied to a child's net tuition after consideration of any scholarships, tuition grants, financial aid, etc. If payment in full is not received on or before June 15, the discount opportunity expires. Direct debits are made on the 5th or 20th of the month per parents' preference, as selected on the Financial and Banking Agreements.

Placement is secured with a \$500 per family tuition deposit, along with a signed Financial Agreement and a Banking Agreement for tuition payment processing.

Invoices detailing tuition and fees are emailed to families beginning in May. Tuition invoices cannot be issued until a family's financial file is complete and placement is secured. The tuition deposits are applied to tuition invoices and reduces the balance due.

Should an unusual circumstance occur during the school year that affects tuition payments, the family should contact the principal immediately. **All deposits and tuition payments are non-refundable.** Tuition for partial year attendance is determined on a full trimester basis, except for fees which are not prorated.

Fees vary by grade level and include Archdiocesan assessments, test fees, classroom supplies, activities and field trips, materials, textbooks, and technology fees. The 8th grade fee also includes all graduation expenses, including gowns, diplomas, and final 8th grade celebration events. The net fees include a \$65 state textbook credit that is deducted from the fees of the first 713 K-8 students who complete the registration process. These fees are included and itemized on a family's tuition invoice.

Fees 2025-2026	
PRE K 3 YEAR OLDS	\$375.00
PRE K 4 YEAR OLDS – HALF DAYS	\$395.00
PRE K 4 YEAR OLDS - FULL DAYS	\$465.00
KINDERGARTEN	\$596.00
1 ST GRADE	\$616.00
2 ND GRADE	\$601.00
3 RD GRADE	\$621.00
4 TH GRADE	\$601.00
5 TH GRADE	\$581.00
6 TH GRADE	\$561.00
7 TH GRADE	\$561.00
8 TH GRADE	\$611.00

Home School Association Dues are \$75.00 per family annually and are included on the tuition invoice.

New Families are assessed a \$100 Application Fee per student at the time they apply for admission consideration.

Returning Families pay an annual \$100 per family Re- Registration Fee if they indicate their intent to return for the following school year.

Re-registration for current families and applications for new families are completed in the Finalsite Enrollment Portal. This can be found under the Admissions tab or the Parents tab on our website. Before a new student's official acceptance, there is a screening process and completion of necessary forms. Acceptance into grade 8 is restricted to transfers from Catholic schools. Students are encouraged and welcome to shadow for a school day.

Delinquent Accounts

Report cards and school records may be withheld because of financial obligations, including tuition, fees, Extended Care charges, damaged/lost textbooks, etc. If a prior year's tuition has not been paid in full by the beginning of the new school year, students will not be re-enrolled. If an account balance for the current year is past due at the start of the school year, students will not be included on a class list.

St. Margaret School reserves the right to refuse to provide any official school record, including report cards and diplomas, to parents or other educational institutions until all financial obligations to the school are satisfied in full. Delinquent accounts may result in suspension of classroom services, access to PowerSchool, school-sponsored extracurricular activities, classes and exams. Payment on delinquent account balances may be required to be in the form of cash

or certified check at the school's discretion. St. Margaret School will consider requests for exceptions to these policies on an individual basis if it judges extraordinary circumstances are demonstrated. If an account is delinquent past 90 days, the student may be dis-enrolled and the account turned over to a collection agency. All related collection fees and expenses will be the responsibility of the parent.

Tuition Assistance

There are several potential resources for financial assistance for qualified families, and awards may be received from more than one source. Families are required to pay at least 25% of their total obligation towards the cost of educating their student. Additional information can be found on our website at <https://smsch.org/admissions/grant-aid/>

- **St. Margaret Parish**

Tuition grants are available to families who demonstrate financial need and are registered and active parishioners of St. Margaret Parish. Families must apply every year for tuition assistance, and continued need must be demonstrated. Families requesting consideration for tuition assistance must complete and submit the required application and financial documents by the stated due date. Applications are available through the Parish Office.

- **Area Parishes**

Several local parishes that do not have associated schools also offer tuition grants to their parishioners. Families should contact their home parish for more information.

- **Archdiocese of Baltimore**

Families may apply for tuition assistance through the Archdiocese of Baltimore. An application and required financial documents must be completed and submitted by the stated dates to FACTS. Information and forms can be found at: <https://online.factsmgt.com/signin/3QDJ0>

- **Maryland State BOOST Scholarships**

Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) provides state-funded scholarships for some students who are eligible for the Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Program to attend eligible nonpublic schools. Awards are granted based on household income, with the lowest income served first. The electronic application for parents to complete is available at: <http://marylandpublicschools.org/Pages/boost/index.aspx>. The application deadline is generally in late May, with award decisions being made in July. An application must be submitted each year to be considered for a renewal award.

Withdrawal

Should a family enroll in an AOB school, and later decide to withdraw, responsibility for tuition payment may remain with the family to compensate the school for expenses already incurred as well as the potential lost opportunity to fill that seat with another student.

The amount of tuition obligation is dependent on the date of withdrawal. Please note that application/re-registration fees and enrollment deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable, regardless of the date of withdrawal.

If a student withdraws, or is asked to withdraw, for any reason during the school year, the school will determine the tuition obligation on a per-trimester basis. Annual fees are not pro-rated. Any tuition refund is contingent upon the school receiving written notice prior to the student's actual withdrawal date, and the refund amount, if any, will be determined based on the actual withdrawal date and the trimester in which the last day of attendance falls. Students who withdraw prior to the first day of class for the academic year will not be assessed a full trimester tuition; however, in addition to the tuition deposit, any tuition payments made to date are non-refundable. This policy applies to all students, including preschoolers, who must be able to independently use the bathroom facilities in order to attend classes.

Parents should notify the Principal, Admissions Office, and Business Office in writing when withdrawing children. Parents need to complete a record release form that will be forwarded to the new school. St. Margaret School reserves the right to refuse to provide any official school records, including report cards, to other educational institutions until all financial obligations to the school are satisfied in full.

All fees are non-refundable and are not prorated if a family withdraws or enrolls midyear.

Miscellaneous Expenses

If funds are sent to school for any other reason, please enclose payment in an envelope marked with the student's name, grade and designation (i.e. EDC, fundraiser, etc.)

Returned Payments

If a direct debit or check payment is not honored by the bank on which it is drawn for any reason, a \$25 fee will be assessed on a per transaction basis to reimburse the school for the fees we incurred. The school may, at its discretion, impose the requirement that all subsequent payments be in cash or certified check/money order.

Damage Assessment

Parents or guardians are financially responsible for damages to school and campus facilities, or other person's property incurred by their children. This includes lost textbooks, library books, or other school owned materials, including computers and other electronic equipment. School-issued devices are an important learning tool and should be handled with care. Families will be held financially responsible for the cost of repairs or replacement if a device is damaged due to student negligence, misuse, or intentional damage.

HEALTH POLICIES

Maryland School Immunization Requirements

All students in Catholic schools must be immunized in accordance with Maryland State Law. A child may not enter school, unless he/she has submitted an official immunization record or other appropriate documentation of immunization status. The immunization record must have the month, day and year of each vaccination and be signed by a physician or health department official. In the case of religious objection or medical contra-indication, form DHMH 89, must be submitted and kept on file and be approved by the school. Exempted students are to be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of the disease for which they are not immunized.

Health Records

The school maintains a health file for each student for the duration of enrollment. Parents are required to complete a Health Form listing any allergies, serious medical conditions, medications, and emergency contact information. The school must be notified of any changes that occur during the school year.

Students entering elementary school must submit the following forms:

- Physician Physical Form
- Immunization Records
- Dental Form
- Parent Health Assessment (allergies, serious medical conditions, medications, and emergency contact information)
- Lead Testing (by first grade)

Students entering middle School (6th grade and new students only) must submit the following forms:

- Physician Physical Form
- Updated Immunization Form
- Dental Form
- Parent Health Assessment (allergies, serious medical conditions, medications, and emergency contact information)

All forms are to be sent to the school prior to the first day of school. If you have any questions please contact the school nurse.

Dispensing of Medication

The administration of medication in school is discouraged. However, if a student's physician recommends that the student receive prescription or over-the-counter medication during the school day, a written order from the student's doctor is required. Medication can only be dispensed with a written order from the student's physician, specifying start and stop date. The original medication container or box for inhalers must be brought to the school. These containers or boxes should include the following: name of medication, directions for use, time

for dispensing, name of doctor ordering the medication, date of prescription, expiration date as stated by the pharmacist, strength of medication/dosage, and student's name and grade.

A student is not permitted to possess, administer, or distribute medication, whether prescription or non-prescription. Under special circumstances, individual students may be authorized by their physician to carry and self-administer emergency medications (e.g. inhalers, epi-pens). In this case, the school nurse must be consulted. All medication must be delivered to school by a parent/guardian.

Communicable Diseases

Parents must call the school if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease. The school must notify their county Health Department. All reports are confidential. Reportable diseases include the following:

Measles – regular or German (Rubella)

Tuberculosis

Meningitis

Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Hepatitis

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

Food Poisoning

Human Immune Deficiency

Mumps

Virus Infection (AIDS and all

Adverse reactions to Pertussis Vaccine

other symptomatic infections)

Lyme disease

Animal bites / Rabies

Chicken Pox (varicella)

Influenza

Covid 19

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)

Any student with drainage from the eyes associated with conjunctivitis (pink eye) must be kept at home until under treatment from a doctor. A doctor's note will be required for readmission to school.

Varicella (Chicken Pox)

Students who have chicken pox are excluded from school until all lesions are scabbed over.

Head Injury

If any injury to the head or any other serious injury occurs to a student, then the nurse will call the parent and send home a report. The report is to be signed by the parent/guardian and returned to school. If the parent/guardian or alternative contact person cannot be reached in an emergency, the school will contact police/ambulance for assistance.

Insurance

The Office of Risk Management, on behalf of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, offers a voluntary student accident plan for school families to purchase. This coverage is an inexpensive way for families to cover co-pays, high deductibles, and may even provide accident coverage in the event that no other health coverage is available. If a family declines this coverage please be aware that

any injuries sustained while at school or during school activities may not be covered by any Archdiocesan insurance policy. For more details regarding purchasing student accident insurance please visit www.archbalt.org/risk.

Allergies

Parents must notify the school of their child's allergies including food allergies. School medication orders must be renewed each year by the physician and the order must be signed on or after July 1. If the student carries an EPIPEN with them, the physician must state this requirement on the order. If any food allergy is reported, those items will not be given to the student at any time.

Bloodborne Pathogens

A complete Bloodborne Pathogens Standard Exposure Control Plan has been established by the school and can be found in each Faculty Handbook and on file in the Office.

Birthday Celebrations/Treats/Snacks

In order to keep students with food allergies and sensitivities safe, all food items sent into school must be store bought with ingredient labels. Teachers will determine the time of day the food items will be shared that is convenient to their schedule. Food treats are to remain small in nature such as ice cream, snack packs, cookies, cupcakes. Full lunches are not to be purchased for the class. Please reach out to the classroom teacher for any questions or concerns. If the student is hosting a birthday party, invitations cannot be distributed at school.

General Use Epipens

As of July 1, 2024, St. Margaret School has adopted a policy allowing the availability of stock epinephrine in the health suite for use in the event of an anaphylactic emergency. This epinephrine is for emergency use during normal school days and is not dependent on allergy history. It is not available outside of normal school hours or on field trips. Students with a known history of severe allergies are still expected to maintain emergency action plans, medical orders, and their own supply of emergency medication.

Naloxone (Narcan)

As of July 1, 2024, St. Margaret School has adopted a policy allowing the availability of Naloxone through the health suite for use in the event of a suspected overdose emergency. This Naloxone is for emergency use during normal school days. It is not available outside of normal school hours or on field trips. As required by the "Start Talking Maryland Act" a communication about the program is provided at the beginning of the school year. For those interested in learning more about the program and administration of Naloxone, please refer to the following resources: https://youtu.be/p9hYzykHs_o and [Pages - Home \(maryland.gov\)](https://www.maryland.gov/Pages/Home.aspx).







Vision/Hearing Screening

The school follows the directives of Harford County Health Department and responds to parent's requests for individual testing.

This testing is usually done for:

- All new students who have not provided documentation for screening in the past year
- All students the year they enter the school in Grades PreK, Kindergarten, 1, and 8
- Grade 3 or Grade 4 if funding is available
- Any student with a suspected hearing or vision problem as reported by school staff or parents/guardians.

I need to stay home if...

I have a fever	I have shortness of breath or a persistent dry cough	I am vomiting	I have diarrhea	I have a rash	I have an eye infection
					
Temperature of 100.4 or higher in the last 48 hours	In the past 48 hours	Within the past 24 hours	Within the past 24 hours	Body rash with itching or fever.	Redness, itching, and/or "crusty" drainage from eye.

I am ready to go back to school when I am...

Fever free for 48 hours without use of fever reducing medication. i.e. Tylenol, Motrin	My symptoms are improving and I have not developed a fever.	Free from vomiting for at least 2 solid meals.	Free from diarrhea for at least 24 hours.	Free from rash, itching or fever. I have been evaluated by my doctor if needed.	Evaluated by my doctor and have a note to return to school.
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PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

Responsibilities

By enrolling a child in our Catholic school, a parent/guardian agrees to the following important responsibilities:

- to be a partner with the school in the education of your child
- to understand and support the Catholic mission and identity of the school
- to read all communications from the school and to request clarification when necessary
- to know who your child's teachers are and to observe parent-teacher conference dates and any special requests for meetings
- to discuss concerns and problems with the person (s) most directly involved
- to be as actively involved as you can be in the life of the school and to volunteer assistance when possible
- to promote your school and to speak well of it to others, to include but not limited to social media platforms
- to meet your financial obligations in a timely manner and to support the fundraising efforts of the school when possible
- to appreciate Catholic education and the benefits of attending a school in a Christ-centered environment
- to behave appropriately at all school related functions, both inside and outside of the school hours, and whether on school property or third-party site, and including sporting events
- to follow the guidelines of this handbook, including non-academic standards and expectations, including related to parking, drop-off, pick-up, and communication with teachers and staff
- to demonstrate appropriate behavior and respect to all teachers, staff, and administrators, this includes verbal, written, or electronic exchanges

Support, Partnership, and Compliance by Families

In cases of disregard of the direction of staff members, threats or threatening behavior, serious or repeated noncompliance with school policies or procedures, or other demonstrated lack of support or cooperation, whether by parent, child, or other family member, the administration reserves the right to withdraw child/children from the school. Depending on the severity of the breach of partnership with the school, parent or other family member may be prohibited from entering the campus.

Parent/Teacher Communication

In the best interest of students, the school welcomes and encourages communication between parents and teachers. Whenever a situation occurs that causes concern, the concern should be addressed first at the level at which the situation arose. Please contact your child's teacher directly by email or phone to schedule a mutually convenient time to meet. Parents are not permitted to interrupt teachers before or during school hours. Teachers should be seen by appointment only. Due to instructional time with their students, teachers may respond to emails and calls up to 48 hours on business days. Teachers typically do not respond to emails and calls

during the evening or over the weekend. If a conference with the principal and/or teacher is needed, please call the office, email or write a note at least a day or two in advance of the conference date. Emergencies and time sensitive needs require parents to contact the main office (ES: 410-879-1113 MS: 410-877-9660).

Parents whose phone numbers are unlisted must give the school either the unlisted number or a number where the parents can be reached. It is essential that the school has this information in case of an emergency. This information will be kept in the strictest confidence. Any change of phone number or home address is to be given to the school office and homeroom teacher immediately.

Non-Custodial Parent

Emergency card information for each child is to be kept current. It is the parent's responsibility for keeping that information current. Children will only be released to the person(s) designated on the emergency card, unless otherwise instructed by the custodial parent/guardian.

Non-custodial parents are welcome to review their child's records unless there is a court order or legal agreement prohibiting such access. The school may notify the custodial parent of a request to review records.

St. Margaret School does not allow a non-custodial parent physical access to his/her child during school hours or on school premises unless the custodial parent has consented, or the school has a court order permitting access.

Change of Name or Family Status

If there is a change in the family status, a change of a child's name, or a change in custody arrangement, it is important that the school be informed promptly of the change. In case of a change of custody, a copy of the portion of the court order that describes the custody arrangements must be on file with the school. The parent also needs to notify the principal.

Change in Address, Telephone Number, and Email Address

When there is a change in address, phone number or email address, parents need to update Final Site immediately.

Bright Arrow Communication

St. Margaret School uses Bright Arrow as a tool for communication for the following:

- Emergency related information (phone call, text message and email)
- Weather related closings or delays (email)
- Reminders for early dismissal days (email)
- Events (email)
- Non-emergency announcements (email)

Parents are responsible for keeping contact information (phone and email accounts) up to date as emergency related information will be sent through Bright Arrow which pulls information from Powerschool and School Admin.

Constant Contact Newsletter (Principal's Post)

St. Margaret School uses Constant Contact as a tool for communication for the following:

- Weekly and monthly information
- Important school related information and upcoming events
- Reminders for HSA related events
- Reminders for other school related activities and timelines

Parent/Teacher Conferences:

Mandatory parent/teacher conferences will be held on October 30, 2025. Parents will be informed as to when to register online for one teacher conference per student. Parent teacher conferences are to be held in person.

Home School Association (HSA)

The purpose of a Home and School Association is to partner with the school in providing support for both the academic and social aspects of the school. St. Margaret School is uniquely blessed in the viability of its Home and School Association.

The objectives of this organization are:

- To promote the spiritual and educational welfare of children at home, school, church, and community in a program of Catholic Education.
- To encourage between the home and school a greater degree of cooperation in the Catholic education of our children and to promote a clearer understanding of the mutual educational responsibilities of parents and teachers.
- To encourage the continuance of high standards of Catholic family life.
- To function as a non-profit organization and conduct affairs to raise funds, the net proceeds from which will be donated to Saint Margaret School.
- To act as a liaison between parents and the school.

The Home and School Association operates in a manner which supports and respects the school policies and practices as established by the administration. Membership consists of parents or guardians of students in the school, the administration and members of the faculty. Meetings are announced through the school newsletter and calendar.

Mrs. Stacy Ward - HSA President

smshsapresident@gmail.com

Room Parents

Room parent volunteers are utilized in each classroom to provide support to the teachers and assist them with various tasks throughout the year. The room parents communicate important information to families and organize volunteers. All correspondence sent through the class must first be sent to the homeroom teacher for approval. Room parents should support the Mission of St. Margaret School and communicate in a positive manner (including emails, social networking, etc.) All room parents must be VIRTUS compliant.

SAFETY

Emergency Plan

The Archdiocese has issued directives for handling emergency situations. St. Margaret School will abide and implement these directives. All personnel have been versed on these procedures for proper implementation to ensure the safety of the children. Fire and various safety drills are in place as well as security systems.

Fire and Safety Drills

These drills are conducted on a regular basis during the school year as required by the State of Maryland. Safety drills include evacuation, reverse evacuation, lock-down, shelter-in-place, hold, and severe weather drills. Please abide by all policies to help us provide a safe environment for our children..

Emergency & Weather Related Closings/Delayed Openings

St. Margaret School follows the Harford County School System decision on closings, late openings, and early closings. All school information is announced on radio and TV stations (WBAL). On a scheduled early dismissal day, if Public Schools open 2 hours late, St. Margaret School will be closed. On days when Harford County Public Schools has a predetermined system closure and St. Margaret School is open, listen to radio and TV stations (WBAL) for our school announcement. School alert messages will be sent to families for any weather related delay or closure.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency response Act (Ahera)

In October 1986, the U.S. Congress enacted the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Under this law, comprehensive regulations were developed to address asbestos problems in public and private elementary and secondary schools. These regulations require most schools to inspect for friable and non friable asbestos, develop asbestos management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings and implement response actions in a timely manner. Our program for fulfilling these responsibilities is outlined in our asbestos management plan. This plan contains information on our inspections, re-inspections, response actions and post- response action activities, including periodic surveillance activities that are planned or are in progress. The plan is kept in the Facilities Office and may be viewed upon request during normal business hours.

Child and Youth Protection

St. Margaret School follows the policies and procedures as outlined by the Office of Child and Youth Protection.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Policy Procedures

Maryland law requires that all educators and other school employees, including volunteers, report suspected child abuse or neglect to the proper authorities in order that children may be protected from harm and the family may be helped. Our school policy supports Maryland laws in this regard and requires that all school staff report suspected abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services, Protective Services Division, and/or the local police department, as well as to the Principal. The Office and Child Youth Protection (OCYP) director, Archdiocese of Baltimore, may also be contacted.

Student Cell Phones

Cell phones are permitted for grades 6-8 but **MUST** remain off during the school day and stored in their classroom. Parents are asked to support this policy by not texting, calling, or otherwise electronically communicating with their children.

Middle school students must turn their cell phones off when they arrive at school each morning and put their phones into the designated storage space in their homeroom, where the phones must remain throughout the day. Middle school students can remove their cell phones from storage only at dismissal when packing up their bags for departure, but should not turn them on or use them until after they exit the building at dismissal.

Students are not permitted to wear a Smart Watch on campus. If a student brings a Smart Watch to school or a school function, the Cellular Phone Policy will be followed. Violation of any of the policy stated above will result in demerit or detention, and seizure of the cell phone by the teacher or assistant principal until the end of the school day. The content of any cellular device brought into the building, including pictures, text messages, applications, internet history, and phone call records, can be subject to review by the principal or assistant principal at any time and without prior warning if inappropriate use of the device is suspected.

Visitors

In order to ensure a safe environment for your child, all school doors will remain locked during the school day. All visitors must report to the office and receive an identification badge through RAPTOR before visiting other parts of the school buildings. **A valid driver's license or state ID must be presented to receive a badge and access to the buildings.**

Volunteers

Prior to volunteering, all volunteers must be fully trained in VIRTUS as required by the Archdiocese of Baltimore. All policies and procedures must be followed for Child and Youth Protection. Please contact Mr. Jon Gerstmyer for further information at jgerstmyer@smsch.org or access the Archdiocese of Baltimore's website for current information on compliance.

Parents are the primary educators of their children. St. Margaret School does not assume complete responsibility for this most important task of educating our students. Rather, the school works in partnership with the parents or guardians. For this reason, some form of parental involvement in the school is expected of each family. Volunteers are needed for classrooms, library, outreach activities, and the Hot Lunch Program.

Before reporting for duty, approved volunteers must sign in at the school office and obtain a Visitor's Badge. You will need your driver's license in order to complete the RAPTOR screening process. Badges are discarded before leaving the building and volunteers should sign out at the main office upon departure. Siblings are not permitted during school hours when parents are volunteering.

Playground/School Supervision Provisions

Preschool and Kindergarten students utilize the school playground for recess time. Students in grades K-5 utilize the school parking lot (Peaceful Playground) during recess time. Students should be supervised at all times on the school playground and Peaceful Playground.

Supervision Responsibilities (Before and After the School Day)

Parents are required to follow the times stipulated when dropping off or picking up students. The school is not responsible for supervision of students before or after the school day. The school is not liable for any injuries or accidents which may occur before or after school hours.

If the student is participating in a scheduled, supervised activity before or after school hours, specific arrangements must be made for drop-off and/or pick-up at the designated times. If children are participating in before or after school care, parents must comply with the rules established by the program for drop-off and pick-up.

Students should arrive at school no earlier than 7:45AM at the Elementary School campus and 7:25AM at the Middle School campus. Staff will not be available to supervise students until those times. Students MUST remain in their vehicles until a staff member permits entrance to the school. Parents MUST remain in their vehicles during drop off.

Tobacco and Drugs

St. Margaret School is a tobacco-free and drug-free workplace.

Transportation Procedure

Parents are required to follow traffic regulations, traffic patterns, speed signs, and morning and afternoon dismissal procedures. Students are only to be released to custodial parents or those adults listed on contact forms. Students will never be allowed to leave school in an Uber, Lyft, etc.

Use of School Grounds

During the course of the school day, the school grounds are limited to the use of the school, its classes and daily operations. Use of the grounds after school hours must be cleared through the St. Margaret Parish.

Pets

Pets (dogs, cats, etc.) are not permitted on school grounds (on or off leashes) due to health and safety reasons before, during or after school hours.

STUDENT SERVICES

Before and After School Care

EDC (Extended Day Care) is regulated by the Maryland Office of Child Care and is offered between the hours of 7:00 AM and 6:00 PM for children enrolled in preschool through grade 5. Middle School Day Care is available from school dismissal until 6 PM. The rules and regulations stated in the handbook also apply during Extended Day Care time since this program is an extension of the school day.

	Morning *Not Returning for Aftercare Daily	Morning *Not Returning for Aftercare Weekly	Morning *Returning for Aftercare Daily	Morning *Returning for aftercare Weekly	2 Hour Delay *Center Opens at 9am	2:45 Pick Up Daily Rate	2:45 Pick Up Weekly Rate	4:00 Pick Up Daily Rate	4:00 Pick Up Weekly Rate	6:00 Pick Up Daily Rate	6:00 Pick Up Weekly Rate
Pre-K 3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$24.95	\$74.85	\$30.50	\$91.50	\$38.15	\$114.45
Pre-K 4 (Full Day) through Grade 8	\$7.45	\$37.25	\$2.75	\$13.75	\$7.45	N/A	N/A	\$11.85	\$59.25	\$22.10	\$110.50

Late Fee charge past 6 pm closure is \$1.00 per child per minute.

Advanced sign up required for early dismissal days. Must have a minimum number of 10 children signed up in order for the center to open. Flat Rate of \$42.10. Pick up will be at 4pm.

There will be a \$25 REST MAT FEE billed in September for any half day preschoolers.

Re-registration of current families using extended care takes place in February. Applications are available in the main office on each campus or call 410-879-1113 (ES) and 410-877-9660 (MS). There is a \$25 non-refundable application fee. Parents are urged to register early as there are limited openings. For fees and availability, please contact the Director of Extended Day Care, Mrs. Henry at phenry@smsch.org

ES Lunch/ES Cafe

Students in grades 3 through 5 will use the gym for lunch during designated periods. Round tables with benches can accommodate all students from one grade level at a time. Students in PreK through grade 2 remain in their classrooms for lunch with their classroom aides. Parents in all grades are welcome to sign up to assist during lunch duty.

Hot lunch program is sponsored by the HSA (Home School Association). Hot lunches are offered from October through May, two days a week. Link to order through the hot lunch program is available on the SMS website or [here](#). Parents may not bring in hot lunches or have food delivered to the school for lunch.

School Organizations and School Activities

Clubs, school organizations, and activities will be evaluated based on risk, availability of space, and size of the program. This includes clubs/activities that occur during the school day as well as those after school. Information about the activities listed below is communicated via daily school announcements and permission slips are required for participation. Students must maintain passing grades in all subjects in order to participate in school clubs. A small fee may be associated with certain activities.

Archdiocesan Spelling Bee
Athletics
Band and Chorus
Communications Club
Creative Arts Club
Flag Helpers
Green School Club
Junior Lego
Local High School Academic Competitions
Music Ministry
National Junior Art Honor Society
Retreats
Robotics
Rosary Club
Service Club
Student Ambassadors

Guidance and Counselor

St. Margaret School has one school counselor on each campus five days per week. School counselors meet with students in the classroom, per student request, or per teacher request. Counselors communicate regularly with parents, teachers, and administration to best support the students.

Leadership Programs

National Junior Art Honor Society (NJAHS) - St. Margaret School sponsors a chapter of the National Junior Art Honor Society. Members are a select group of 6th- 8th graders that exemplify a passion for art, character, service to others, citizenship, and most importantly, leadership.

Student Council - The Student Council is a service organization which promotes leadership skills. Representatives are elected from each homeroom in grades 6-8. The representatives serve as a liaison between students and administration. Ideas regarding student activities, school service, and fundraising are brought from the representatives to the administration. 6 through 8 vote on their student council officers for the following school year.

TECHNOLOGY

Acceptable Use Policy for the Internet and Technology Tools

Technology skills are necessary to ready our students for their future. Access to the Internet and technology tools (including software tools, web-based applications and services, computer equipment, iPads, and other personal electronic devices) allow students to conduct research, produce digital content, and communicate with classmates and teachers. The Internet and technology tools put enormous power at the fingertips of users. As such, they also place a great deal of responsibility on users.

It is imperative that technology resources be used to build community, encourage critical reflection, and foster readiness for future learning. Developments in technology at the School are to be used ethically, legally, and responsibly. As in other areas, our students are expected to make good choices with regard to their behavior.

Individual users are responsible for their activity on the Internet and technology tools, including the material stored and information shared. In order to protect private and personal information, unauthorized disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal information is prohibited. The School reserves the right to edit Internet accounts for child-only configurations, and to run filtering software for students' protection.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that student users (and their parents) recognize the limitations the School imposes on the use of the Internet and technology tools and that they understand the standards of behavior the School expects of users.

All users of the School network and technology tools, whether on a school-owned or personal device, are responsible for adhering to the following guidelines for acceptable use.

Acceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools are for authorized academic and school-related activities that support learning and teaching and:

- Respect the privacy and property rights of others and the well-being of the School
- Are consistent with Roman Catholic values and morals
- Treat technology tools and computer equipment with respect.

Unacceptable uses of the Internet and technology tools include but are not limited to:

- Violating the rights or privacy of others, including by photographing or filming an individual without consent
- Posting or distributing videos or photographs without consent of the persons depicted and the School
- Using technology to send profanity, obscenity, or other offensive or harmful language and/or images
- Unauthorized copying, downloading, or installation of content, software or applications (including plagiarism or “pirating” music)
- Sending false information or sending messages to the School community that fail to

- identify the sender (including anonymous messages or messages using a pseudonym)
- Using any program designed to disrupt network performance or breach network security, such as software designed to capture passwords or break encryption protocols
- Revealing personal information beyond what is required for login while using Internet or web-based resources
- Responding to inappropriate messages from others (which should be reported to the School)
- Downloading or copying information onto disks or hard drives without prior teacher approval
- Accessing, downloading, storing, or printing files or messages that are inappropriate or may be offensive to others (including pornography and other inappropriate images)
- Sharing of passwords or attempting to discover another's password (passwords should be changed frequently)
- Using or accessing another's account (network accounts are to be used only by those for whom the account has been established)
- Intentionally writing, producing, generating, copying or introducing dangerous codes or programs designed to cause harm, including, but not limited to viruses, bugs, 'worms', etc.
- Intentionally damaging, altering, or tampering with any hardware, software, printers, keyboards, speakers, etc.
- Accessing or searching files, directories, or folders for which the user does not have authorization
- Intentionally erasing, renaming, or disabling of anyone else's files or programs
- Accessing social media, email, or other off-task websites or apps during School without explicit permission of a teacher or adult supervisor
- Violating School conduct rules or the law.

Harassment/cyber-bullying of others online, whether against a student, non-student, or employee, is serious, is prohibited, and is contrary to the School's policy and values. Harassment/cyber-bullying whether it is initiated on campus or off campus, online or in person, should be reported immediately to a faculty member, and may lead to disciplinary action and possible criminal prosecution under Maryland's law prohibiting the Misuse of Interactive Computer Service ("Grace's Law").

Parents are responsible for:

- Reviewing and discussing this policy with their child as well as supporting the School in its enforcement
- Partnering with the School in monitoring their child's technology use
- Modeling appropriate Internet behaviors for their child
- Reporting any concerns regarding this policy or their child's use of the Internet or technology tools to School personnel.

Failure to adhere to the policy guidelines may result in a revocation of a student's Internet access and other technology privileges and disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems designed to perform tasks that usually require human intelligence, such as reasoning, problem solving, learning, and decision-making. *Generative AI* is a type of artificial intelligence that creates new content, such as text, images, videos, or music, based on patterns it has learned from existing data. Examples include chatbots that write responses, or tools that generate pictures or videos.

Students in preK–grade 8 are not permitted to use generative artificial intelligence (AI) at this time.

Web-based Services

The School uses Google Apps for Education as well as other web-based education tools, sites, and services (“web-based services”) to provide students with important web-based educational experiences and enhanced opportunities to communicate and share collaboratively with one another. As part of students’ use of web-based services, certain educational records may be created, collected, or stored. Directory information, such as a child’s name, email address, grade/age, and enrollment status, may also be shared with web-based services. The School may access, monitor, and review children’s use of web-based services and Internet use and children shall not have any expectation of privacy with respect to any communications or activities through such services. Use of web-based services is for educational purposes only and subject to the conduct and acceptable use guidelines set forth in this Handbook. A list of the School’s web-based services and corresponding privacy policies are available upon request. By enrolling a child in the School, the parent consents to the child’s participation in the School’s academic activities and programs, including the child’s use of and access to web-based services as described in this paragraph. In order to withhold or withdraw consent for the use of web-based services, parents must contact the School principal in writing.

UNIFORMS

Students wear uniform clothing in elementary and middle school. We reserve the right to modify the uniform policy should mandates from the Archdiocese of Baltimore and/or the State of Maryland change during the school year.

The official uniform company for St. Margaret School is Flynn & O’Hara. They are located at North Plaza Shopping Center, 88687 Waltham Woods Road, Parkville, MD 21234. They can be reached at 410-828-4709 and <https://www.flynnohara.com/>

School uniforms are worn by students in kindergarten through grade eight beginning with the first day of school. Students are expected to be in complete uniform throughout the school day from the moment they arrive at school until they leave school grounds. Parents are encouraged to

contact the school if clarification of any element of the dress code is necessary. The acceptable uniform is as follows:

Pre-K and Kindergarten

Both boys and girls wear the school gym uniform to school every day. From November 4, 2024 through March 28, 2025 students wear the school sweatpants and sweatshirts over their gym uniform. A long sleeved shirt option is available for students in grades PreK and K as another option to the sweatshirt.

Physical Education (PE) Uniform

- Grey t-shirt with school logo
- Navy mesh shorts with school logo - all shorts must be no shorter than 1 inch above the knee
- Navy sweatshirt with school logo (SMS crewneck or quarter zip)
- Navy sweatpants with school logo
- Sneakers - Athletic tennis shoes (tie or velcro) that support the student's foot and ankle during physical activity
- Socks - plain white or navy blue socks (no logos) visible at the top of the shoe.
- No defacing of the gym uniform is permissible.
- All students in grades 1-8 wear PE uniforms to school on gym days.
- St. Margaret School uniform sweatshirts and sweatpants must be worn over their PE uniforms from November 4, 2024 to March 28, 2025.

Grades 1-5 Boys

- White polo shirt with SMS logo, tucked in, short sleeve (warm weather), long sleeve (cold weather)
- Socks-plain white or navy blue socks (no logos)
- Classic dirty buck with the red sole shoes (Examples: Bass Dirty Buc or Academy Gear/Willits Dirty Buc (Flynn & O'Hara)
- SMS navy sweatshirt or ¼ SMS Zip pullover
- Solid navy uniform pullover sweater or vest (no white trim)
- Warm weather: Navy blue dress shorts with navy, black or brown solid color belt. Levis, corduroy, and denim shorts are not acceptable. Shorts must have a belt loop.
- Cold weather: Navy blue dress pants with a hem that touches the shoe top with a solid navy, brown, or black belt. Levis, corduroys, and denims are not acceptable. Pants must have a belt loop.

Grades 1-5 Girls

- Plaid uniform jumper that is no more than 1 inch above the knee
- White uniform oxford blouse with a Peter Pan collar, long or short straight, tailored, sleeve as featured at Flynn and O'Hara
- SMS navy sweatshirt or ¼ SMS Zip pullover
- Solid navy uniform cardigan or long sleeved sweater
- Socks-plain white or navy blue socks (no logos)

- Black or navy Mary Jane shoe or Classic dirty buck with the red sole shoes, examples: Bass Dirty Buc or Academy Gear/Willits Dirty Buc (Flynn & O'Hara)
- Cold weather option: Uniform navy slack with belt loops and a solid navy, black, or brown belt may replace the jumper. Plain navy opaque or heavy cable stitched tights may be worn with or without the white crew socks. Navy blue knee highs may also be worn. The polo shirt with the logo may be worn with the uniform slacks.
- Warm weather option: Navy blue uniform walking shorts with belt loop and a solid navy, brown or black belt or a navy skort.

Middle School

Grades 6-8 Boys

- Navy blue dress pants with belt loops with a hem that touches the shoe top. Levis or denims are not acceptable. A solid navy, brown or black belt must be worn with pants.
- White uniform oxford shirt with SMS logo on the pocket, long or short sleeves
- School tie
- Solid navy uniform pullover sweater, school sweatshirt, or ¼ SMS Zip pullover
- Socks-plain white or navy blue (no logos)
- Tan Sperry boat shoe or Classic dirty buck with the red sole shoes, examples: Bass Dirty Buc or Academy Gear/Willits Dirty Buc (Flynn & O'Hara)

Grades 6-8 Girls

- Plaid uniform skirt that is no more than 1 inch above the knee
- White uniform oxford blouse with SMS logo on the collar, long or short sleeves
- School sweatshirt or ¼ SMS Zip pullover
- Socks-plain white crew (no logos)
- Tan Sperry boat shoe or Black or navy Mary Jane shoe or Classic dirty buck with the red sole shoes, examples: Bass Dirty Buc or Academy Gear/Willits Dirty Buc (Flynn & O'Hara)
- Cold weather option: Navy uniform sweater, ¼ SMS Zip pullover, or official school sweatshirt may be worn. Plain navy leggings, navy opaque tights or heavy cable stitched tights may be worn.
- Warm weather option: White golf shirt with SMS logo may be worn with the plaid uniform skirt.

Spirit wear is not considered part of the school uniform. Only students in grades 6-8 may wear SMS spirit wear sweatshirts in place of the blue uniform sweatshirt on PE days.

Hair

Hairstyles are to be neatly groomed. For boys, hair is not to exceed the top of the collar, the top of the ear, or to be below the eyebrows and of reasonable length and height as to not be disruptive to the learning environment. Boys sideburns are not to exceed the bottom of the ear. The following styles are examples of prohibited hairstyles: head shaving, lines and designs, faux-hawks, mohawks, mullets, spikes, fades, ombre, highlighting or coloring of any kind.

St. Margaret School recognizes that particular hairstyles may be part of social, ethnic, spiritual and cultural identities and practices or adopted for protective purposes. In those cases, it is the policy of St. Margaret School to permit individual families to receive an exemption from this policy so that they may choose the appropriate cared-for hairstyle for their child. Should a parent have a question about a hairstyle or wish to request an exemption, they should contact the administration before getting the hair cut or styled.

Jewelry and Accessories

Students are not permitted to wear nail polish, artificial nails, make-up, or tanning products. Girls in grades 6-8 may wear only clear nail polish. Girls only, may wear one pair of earrings in their earlobes. Posts and small hoops are acceptable. Dangling earrings are unacceptable. A watch, religious necklace, and medical alert bracelet/necklace are the only other acceptable items of jewelry that may be worn. On gym day, necklaces should not be worn. Body piercing jewelry is not permitted while on campus. Tattoos must be covered while on campus, and during all school-related events off campus, including during participation in athletic events. SMART watches or any watches connecting to the internet are not permitted. Students are not permitted to bring and use Ipods, Air pods or Ipads to school. Due to the ability of these electronic devices to text, access the internet, email and social media, they are not permitted.

Attire

Student dress should be neat and well-groomed at all times. Shirts and blouses must be buttoned and tucked in. No colored shirts or similar apparel may be worn under the blouses or shirts. Defacement of uniforms is not allowed. The school urges parents to instruct their child(ren) in good habits for personal hygiene at appropriate stages in their development. Uniform slips will be issued to students that are not adhering to the correct dress code policy.

The final decision as to what constitutes acceptable dress and grooming rests with the principal. Students and parents who have questions regarding the acceptability of certain types of clothing and grooming should consult with the principal before appearing in school with them.

Out of Uniform and Uniform Add-on Days 2025-2026

Please see the Parent Key Dates for the 2025-2026 calendar as well as the Principal's Posts for monthly uniform add-on dates and information.

On Out of Uniform Days, students must wear appropriate clothes. Clothing may not contain terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, slogans, writing, or images that are offensive, political, harassing, or discriminating in nature. Halter or crop tops, flip-flops, spaghetti straps, backless shoes, sandals, shirts with inappropriate language and innuendoes, studs, chains, gloves, and skorts are not to be worn. Modesty and safety are of utmost importance. Only the official SMS gym shorts, appropriate in length, may be worn during the warm weather uniform months (August - October 31st); however, shorts are not permitted on out of uniform days during the cold weather uniform dates (November 1st-March 31st). Leggings may be worn with shirts that

provide full coverage of the lower body. Students not meeting these guidelines will be provided with gym uniforms from the nurse's office or will be asked to call parents to provide a change of clothes.

On Uniform Add-on Days, students may add additional items to their standard uniform such as hats, headbands, bows, socks, necklaces. T-shirts and sweatshirts (cold weather) that are related to the add-on theme day are permitted instead of the normal uniform.

The administration will be the judge of the appropriateness and conservativeness of hairdo and jewelry in our school setting. Students who violate the out of uniform rules or uniform add on day rules may receive a demerit or not be allowed to participate in the next out of uniform day.

Used Uniforms

Used uniforms can be dropped off at the main office of each campus 2 weeks prior to a used uniform sale. General used uniform sales will be held in July, during meet the teacher day, before cold weather and warm weather uniform changes. The dates will be announced when finalized through the HSA.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items can be located on each campus. Items with name tags will be returned to individual students. Students are encouraged to check the lost and found regularly if missing belongings.



**PARENT/GUARDIAN
RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK
2025-2026**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Parent/Student Handbook clearly states the philosophy, objectives, programs, policies and regulations of St. Margaret School. By signing the receipt of handbook page, you affirm that you have read the school handbook and recognize the terms and conditions in the handbook including the Acceptable Use Policy for Technology.

Many blessings,
Anna C. Shanahan
Principal

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____