

# St. Marys Catholic Elementary School

## Parent/Student Handbook

2022-2023 School Year



St. Marys Catholic Elementary School  
114 Queens Road  
St. Marys, Pennsylvania 15857  
814-834-4169  
[www.eccss.org](http://www.eccss.org)

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***Member of the Elk County Catholic School System***

Accredited through the  
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools  
Commission on Elementary and Secondary Schools

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Every effort has been made to keep the information in this handbook complete and accurate. However, it is not possible to include all of the school policies in this handbook. Additional school policies may be posted on [www.eccss.org](http://www.eccss.org) or may be distributed to parents by means of additional mailings or handouts.



## **ECCSS Mission Statement**

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Elk County Catholic School System, an educational ministry of the Diocese of Erie, rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence. With God as our constant source of inspiration, our mission is to develop the whole student in mind, body, and spirit while nurturing the values of knowledge, peace, and holiness.

## **ECCSS PHILOSOPHY/BELIEFS**

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A community of students, families, teachers, staff, clergy, and friends, Elk County Catholic School System supports the ministry of its sponsoring parishes by providing a Christ-centered Catholic education. Respecting the dignity of the individual person and the needs of a diverse society, we strengthen the faith and spiritual values students first encounter at home. Committed to the highest standards of academic excellence, we cultivate the qualities of 21st century life-long learners. We instill in each student the ability to create, develop innovative solutions to complex problems, collaborate seamlessly with others, think critically, and communicate effectively. Our students learn to become discerning adults who serve God and their neighbor and who stand firm in the pursuit of beauty, goodness, and truth.

- We believe that the presence of Jesus Christ can be found in every individual.
- We believe that Christian morals and values enhance a student's life.
- We believe that we are to nurture an active faith in God, preparing students to give Christian witness and live peacefully.
- We believe that all children are uniquely created by God, and we assist them in developing their individual talents to reach maximum personal growth.
- We believe that students should be encouraged to serve their families, their church, and their communities.
- We believe that a quality education is essential to student achievement.
- We believe that all students should be provided with realistic challenges that prepare them for the moral, intellectual, social, technological, and physical demands of today's society.
- We believe in our students.

### **Spiritual Dimension**

Spirituality of a Catholic school is all encompassing. Through everything that is done at the school, students are inspired to form a deep, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This is accomplished by teaching the students about Him (His divine nature and His human nature) and by providing an environment in which students are continuously encouraged to live out what they have learned.

The spiritual dimension of the school is carried out through various activities, such as daily prayer, personal prayer, prayer lists, weekly Mass, reception of the sacraments, and various liturgical services. All students, beginning in preschool, participate in formal

religion classes. Study of the Bible is incorporated into the curriculum. Students are also involved in school-wide service projects.

### **Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Erie Mission Statement**

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The Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Erie, in collaboration with family, parish and community, educate our youth to be well-informed citizens with critical thinking skills that will prepare them to live virtuous lives.

In faithfulness to the teachings of Christ and His Church, students will be invited to know, love and serve God in order to evangelize in a global society.

Through a safe, nurturing environment, students are challenged academically, provided opportunities to explore the arts and athletics, and inspired to develop a heart that is open to service.

### **Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Erie Belief Statements**

1. We believe that every child is a uniquely created gift from God graced with inherent dignity and worth.
2. We believe that all students can best reach their fullest potential in a safe, nurturing and faith-filled environment.
3. We believe that every student has unique strengths and talents and can excel in a rigorous, supportive environment.
4. We believe that Prayer, the Sacraments and Christ-centered values permeate all that we do.
5. We believe that a standard of excellence must be maintained in all academic areas.
6. We believe that it is the shared responsibility of educators, family, parish and community to provide for the development of the whole child: spiritual, intellectual, social, physical and emotional.
7. We believe it is the responsibility of our schools to help students discern God's call for their life.
8. We believe that students must develop the skills necessary to respond to God's call in a global society.
9. We believe that everyone is called to serve others.
10. We believe in the value of strategic planning and professional development as a means of continuous improvement.
11. We believe that adherence to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and fidelity to the Bishop of the Diocese of Erie will create a community united on its journey to the truth.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

Elk County Catholic School System President:	Mr. Sam MacDonald
St. Marys Catholic Elementary School Principal:	Mrs. Debbie Slay
Finance Director:	Mr. Bob Breindel
VP of Catholic Missions:	Fr. Justin Pino

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Telephone: 814-834-4169  
Fax: 814-834-7830  
Office Hours: 7:30 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday

## **WELCOME**

This handbook contains significant information about St. Marys Catholic Elementary School, and the Elk County Catholic School System. It clearly explains expectations, possibilities and responsibilities. Please read it carefully. It is certainly in the best interest of everyone in our school community to adhere to the rules that are outlined. Elk County Catholic is a school system rich in tradition that offers a wide range of programs – spiritual, academic, athletic and extracurricular – designed to help the student reach his/her potential as a young adult. We welcome your family as members of our community.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

Regulations are made to ensure the smooth operation of the school and an atmosphere conducive to learning. When a student enrolls in the school, he or she thereby agrees to observe its regulations. It is in the best interest of everyone in the Elk County Catholic School System community that we ask all to obey the rules outlined in this handbook. We hope the regulations are observed in this spirit. The administration reserves the right to waive and/or deviate from any of the policies specific to Elk County Catholic for just cause at their discretion.

## **ADMISSION POLICY**

Elk County Catholic School System does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, disability, age or gender.

Elk County Catholic School System is a private educational institution, preschool through grade 12, with established policies, rules, regulations, and procedures that are consistent with the Catholic identity and mission. Parents who enroll their children in the Elk County Catholic School System should recognize this fact and should carefully read all of the material contained in this handbook. A child's enrollment into Elk County

Catholic School System constitutes parental agreement and acceptance of all of the provisions contained in this handbook.

### **Registration Requirements**

Student entering Kindergarten must be five years of age on or before August 15. Proof of age, i.e. birth certificate, baptismal certificate, passport, is required for a student to be enrolled in school. Exception to these guidelines are extremely unique and made on a case-by-case basis.

The following documents must be presented at the time of registration:

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate (if child has been baptized)
- Record of Immunizations (Kindergarten only) – see below for further details.

*Note: Children in the SMCES kindergarten program do not have to register for first grade nor do students going from fifth grade to sixth grade.*

### **Immunization Requirements (Kindergarten only)**

#### **Required Immunizations:**

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis (one dose on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday)
- 4 doses of polio\*
- 2 doses of measles/mumps/rubella (usually given as MMR)
- 3 doses hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

\*A 4<sup>th</sup> dose is not necessary if the 3<sup>rd</sup> dose was administered at age 4 years or older and at least 6 months after the previous dose.

In accordance with the PA Health Code, on the first day of school, students must have at least one dose of the above vaccinations or risk exemption, unless the child has a medical/philosophical exemption. If a child does not have all the doses listed above or needs additional doses, and the next dose is medically appropriate, the child must receive the dose within the first five days of school or risk exclusion. If the subsequent doses are not medically appropriate, a medical plan for obtaining the required immunizations must be completed within the first five days of school or risk exclusion.

### **Transfer Students**

Transferring into St. Marys Catholic Elementary is a multifaceted process involving an evaluation of a student's academic, social, and behavioral needs in order to ensure a smooth transition. Ideally, all transfers are completed before August 1 of the upcoming school year to ensure all the needs of the student can be met. SMCES will accept transfers after that date if circumstances allow for an effective transition. In all circumstances, it is best to initiate the transfer process as early as possible.

## **School Supplies**

A list of required school supplies for each grade level can be found online or obtained from the office.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

The principal is responsible for the collection, maintenance, security, dissemination, retention, and classification of student educational records. The principal is required to keep a complete and accurate record of each child's attendance and academic progress. Medical and health records will be collected and maintained as required by the PA School Code.

### **Release of Records**

Student records are accessible to legal-age students, their parents/guardians, or their legal representatives. This Right of Access shall be exercised by an appointment at a time mutually convenient to the parties concerned. For the purpose of record access, a "parent" includes either biological parents, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent of the student in the absence of a parent or guardian. The school presumes that either parent of the student has authority to inspect and review the educational records of the student unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a legally binding instrument or a state law or court order governing the divorce, separation, or custody providing to the contrary. Only the minimum personal data, academic reports, and attendance data will be retained in the inactive file once the student leaves the school. No individual or agency outside the school system will be permitted to inspect the student's record without the written permission of the parent or guardian or without the student's permission when he/she is of legal age.

When a student transfers to another ECCSS school, all student academic records, standardized test scores, health records, discipline records, and any other pertinent information will be sent from the school office to the succeeding school's office.

### **Custody Notification**

In families where there are custody arrangements, a copy of the court order is required by law to be kept in the school. If the court order changes or is updated, a copy of the new order must be sent by the parent/guardian to replace the prior order. Without an updated copy, the school will abide by the copy in the school files.

## **TUITION**

The FACTS program is used for tuition collection. In order to provide the school with a stable cash flow and to ensure a timely tuition collection, parents must complete a FACTS application form in order to have their child(ren) registered for the upcoming school year.

Parents have three options for tuition payment:

- 1) Full Payment  
Check or Credit Card
- 2) Two Payments
  - A. Check or Credit Card for first payment
  - B. Completed FACTS Form for the second payment (attach a voided check).  
Second payment is due either January 5<sup>th</sup> or January 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 3) FACTS Payment – Re-enrollment  
Signed re-enrollment form
- 4) FACTS Payment – First Time Participant in the Elk County Catholic School System  
Signed and completed FACTS form (attach a voided check). A complete set of FACTS forms may be obtained from the Finance Office.

It is very important that payment of tuition is done on a timely basis. This allows the school to keep current with obligations. The detailed steps in this procedure are as follows:

- Step One - If not paying in full, a signed FACTS Tuition Agreement form must be completed by all families attending Elk County Catholic School System. This form will indicate the method of payment and the frequency.
- Step Two - Each month a review of the accounts will be done to ensure that payments are being made in accordance with the FACTS agreement.
- Step Three - If payments are not in accordance with the FACTS agreement, a letter will be generated by the Finance Office to remind the parent of payment and to secure information concerning any problems.
- Step Four - If the reminder letter fails to elicit a response and/or a payment, a letter will be sent from the administration outlining further action.
- Step Five - A detailed and binding tuition contract will be drawn up by Elk County Catholic School System and signed by the Director of Finance and the parent representative indicating how much will be paid, how often, and the date of commencement for future payments.

The **Scrip** program is a proven way for a family to significantly reduce tuition costs. Local businesses as well as numerous national chains have joined the schools' efforts in saving parents money toward tuition. Volunteers run the program and will help you register to purchase gift cards on-line or, if available, directly from the school.

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

St. Marys Catholic Elementary School is committed to academic excellence. This goal can only be assured when parental involvement occurs and open communication among parents/guardians, teachers, students, and administrators is practiced. Student progress can be monitored through the weekly folders and the on-line grading system.



The school follows the curriculum guidelines set forth by the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Erie. The diocesan curriculum adheres to all of the course requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, as well as religion classes.

### **Grading Policies**

Report cards are distributed quarterly for grades 1 – 5 following the achievement grade scale as shown here.

A: 93 - 100; B: 85 - 92; C: 76 - 84; D: 69 - 75; E: below 69

Some subjects are graded with performance assessments scores as follows:

- 1: Experiencing difficulty with standard
- 2: Basic – making progress toward standard
- 3: Proficient – consistently meets standard

Kindergartners are assessed three times a year: in November, February, and May. A parent-teacher conference is required by the diocese for the November and May assessments.

### **Final Grades**

Final grades are calculated by averaging all four quarter grades. If a student receives a yearly average below 69%, the student has failed the course. Students failing 2 core courses will not be advanced to the next grade unless the course work is sufficiently completed.

### **Homework**

The purpose for assigning homework is to give students the opportunity to extend lessons, practice skills, engage in critical thinking and develop good work habits. Homework can also serve as one form of communication between the teacher and the family. The amount of time spent on homework is relative to the student's individual ability and study habits. If you find your child is spending an excessive amount of time completing daily homework, please contact their teacher.

### **Make-up Work**

When a student has missed school for a legitimate reason, he/she must make up their work. When a student is absent, parents may request homework which will be ready at the end of the school day. Tests must be made up within three school days after the student returns to school.

### **Cheating**

Cheating is defined as a student intentionally representing someone else's work as their own. Enabling or helping others to cheat is also considered cheating, such as providing someone with completed work for the purpose of copying.

Cheating is a major academic offense and will subject the student to serious disciplinary and/or academic action. The teacher, student, and administration will be

involved in any academic and/or disciplinary decision related to the cheating incident. Each incident will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. In addition, the parents of any student involved in cheating will be promptly notified.

### **Standardized Testing**

A testing program which includes standardized tests of academic achievement and of mental ability (in addition to the regular teacher evaluation) has been designed to provide a continuing record of each child's academic progress in comparison with national norms. The results are also an invaluable aid to the child's teacher in diagnosing strengths and weaknesses of both the class as a whole and the individual student. This enables the teacher to provide a more effective class and individualized instruction.

### **Standardized Testing Schedule**

Throughout the school year, the following tests are administered:

Assessment	Grade	Administered
Acadience Reading	K – 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sept, Jan, and May
Acadience Math	K – 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Sept, Jan, and May
NWEA MAP Periodic	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 5 <sup>th</sup>	October, January, April
ACRE Religion	5 <sup>th</sup>	April

### **Library**

Each class has an opportunity to visit the library. Students can also take advantage of open library times to check out and renew books. Kindergarten students may borrow one book at a time. Students in grades first through fifth may borrow two books at a time. Library material may be checked out for a period of one week, but they have the option of renewing it for a second week. Overdue notices are sent weekly. If a book is lost or destroyed, the student is responsible for the cost of the book. If a book is lost, paid for, and is later found, the money will be refunded. Please do not order a replacement book. Library books are bound differently than a regular book to ensure it will hold up to repeated use.

### **Band**

The band program functions through the Elk County Catholic High School and is available to students in grades four through twelve. Weekly individualized instrument lessons on a variety of musical instruments are provided at no charge to the family. Students may participate in concert band, jazz band, and/or marching band based on their grade level and ability.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips are privileges to students. Therefore, they must realize that participation in such trips must not interfere with their academic progress. Students may be denied permission to attend a field trip if they fail to meet the academic requirements of two classes. Eligibility will be reviewed based on both the eligibility lists submitted by the

teachers and teacher discretion in regard to academic requirements. Students with unexcused or illegal absences may be ineligible to participate in field trips. School policy and conduct guidelines will be enforced on all field trips. A permission form signed by at least one parent must be in the school's possession before a child will be permitted to take part in an activity that will take place off the school property. When a parent signs this form he/she acknowledges that accidents can happen, even when there is no negligence. The parent accepts that possibility and will not hold the school or the teacher liable in such a case.

<b>REGULAR AND DELAY SCHEDULES</b>
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**Preschool Schedule:**

	<u>Regular Day</u>	<u>2 Hour Delay Day</u>
Mornings	8:30 am - 11:00 am	10:30 am - 12:15 pm
Afternoons	12:30 pm – 3:00 pm	1:15 pm – 2:55 pm
All Day	8:30 am – 3:00 pm	10:30 am – 3:00 pm

**Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule:**

<u>Regular Day</u>	<u>2 Hour Delay Day</u>
8:30 am - 3:10 pm	10:30 am - 3:10 pm

**Building access:**

- Arrival: Doors open at 8:05; prayers and announcements begin at 8:30.
- Departure: Prayers and announcements begin at 3:05; dismissal begins immediately after prayers.

*Note: SMCES has an extended day program which provides adult supervision for students who require drop-off or pick-up outside of our regular school hours. Please see below for more information.*

**Emergency Notification System**

ECCSS utilizes an emergency notification system to notify parents of school delays, cancellations, and other school emergencies. Voice messages, text messages, and emails can be delivered to parents. Parents are automatically enrolled through our administrative software program. Please be sure to notify the school if there is any change in your phone number or email address.

<b>EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM</b>
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For a nominal fee, SMCES offers an extended day program for students from Preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The morning program runs from 6:30 am to 8:05 am at which time students are dismissed to their classrooms. The afternoon program begins immediately following afternoon announcements until 4:30 pm. Information concerning the

extended day program is available by contacting the main office. Note: All program offerings are contingent upon staffing availability.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

### **Absence**

When a student is absent, it is the responsibility of the parents to call the main office before 9:00 a.m. to inform the school of the reason for the absence. A message can be left on the office phone prior to 7:30 a.m. If the school does not receive notification by 9:00 a.m., the parent will be contacted by office personnel. The student, on his or her return, must bring a written excuse signed by the parents to the main office or homeroom teacher. The excuse must list the date or dates of the absence and the reason for it. Prior telephone calls or other conversations are not sufficient. When a student is absent from school for part of the day and reports later, he/she must come to the main office with his/her excuse to be admitted to school.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Legal absences include the following: personal illness, approved vacation, medical appointments, and a death in the immediate family. Participation in activities that are sponsored by the school and/or school-connected organizations is not considered an absence. Examples are band trips, Cavalier games, ECCSS affiliated sports, field trips, etc.

### **Classification of Missed Time**

**Tardy:** Students who arrive before 10:15 a.m. will be marked tardy unless they have a medical/dental appointment.

**Half Day Absence:** Students who arrive after 10:15 a.m. will be recorded as a half-day absent. Students who leave school due to illness, an appointment, or other legal absence between 11:30 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. and do not return will be marked absent one half day.

**Early Release:** Student who leave school after 1:45 pm will be marked as early release.

### **Definitions (Pennsylvania School Code)**

**Excuse:** A written communication from the parent of guardian concerning a student's absence which notes the student's name and date and reason for the child's absence.

**Lawful absence:** Absences for which the school has received a written excuse from the parent/guardian. This excuse should be received within three days of the absence. Absences may be excused when a student is prevented from attendance for mental, physical, or other urgent reasons, which include but are not limited to illness, family emergency, death of a family member, medical or dental appointments, authorized school activities, and educational travel of 5 or fewer days with prior approval.

**Cumulative lawful absences:** A maximum of ten days of cumulative lawful absences verified by parental notification are permitted during a school year. Absences beyond ten cumulative days require an excuse from a physician.

**Unlawful absences:** Absences for which the school has not received a written excuse from the parent/guardian OR is being absent without permission or leaving school without permission. If an excuse is not received within three days of the absence, the absence is permanently counted as unlawful.

**Truant:** A student is considered truant when absent for at least three unlawful absences during a school year.

**Habitually truant:** A student is considered habitually truant if she/he has at least six unlawful absences during a school year.

### **Responsible Parties**

The parent/guardian or person in a parental relationship, such as a foster parent, is responsible for ensuring that a child attends school regularly and for providing a written excuse in the event of absence. Principals, teachers, and tutors are required to report to the Catholic Schools Office cases when a child of compulsory school age has been absent three days without a lawful excuse.

### **Appointments**

All doctor, dentist, physical therapy, and counseling appointments must be verified by a formal medical excuse received upon leaving the appointment for the student's return to school. These excuses are needed for each appointment even if the student has a schedule he/she is following. This formal excuse is recognized by the state as a legal excuse – you do not need to submit anything else in writing.

### **Trips**

Parents are encouraged to plan family trips during the summer or during the Christmas or Easter breaks. Special permission to take an extended trip during the school year must be requested at least two (2) weeks in advance of the trip by completing a Vacation Release Form. Only one (1) extended trip will be permitted each year. The student will be given work, where possible, three days in advance. Students then have three school days to fulfill their obligations upon their return. Any work not completed within this time frame will be subjected to the following grading penalties: one day late – no "A"; two days late – no "B"; three days late – no more than 50% credit + must stay after school or come in early to complete missing work.

### **Excessive Absence**

If a student misses five days in a quarter, he/she will then be required to have a doctor's excuse for any subsequent days missed in that quarter. This five-day policy will start over at the beginning of each new quarter. Once a student accumulates a total of ten absences, a doctor's excuse is required for all subsequent absences.

### **Prolonged Absence**

If a student is unable to attend school for a prolonged period of time (3 or more days) but is able to study at home, parents can request assignments for their child. Overall, chronic absenteeism remains a minor issue at Elk County Catholic. However, there is enough cause to detail the protocol and consequences of chronic absence from school.

- When a student exceeds **ten (10) days** absence (without appropriate medical documentation), parents will be consulted in order to assess the need for further intervention.
- If **fifteen (15) days** of absence are reached (regardless of medical or other related issues), there will be parent notification by letter and a mandatory parent/administrator meeting for the purpose of preventing this absenteeism from escalating and determining the need for professional intervention.
- After **twenty (20)** days of absence, all subsequent absences will require a written doctor's excuse along with a written parent explanation in order for the student to gain admittance to school. If students fail to provide a doctor's excuse, all missed days may have to be made-up at the conclusion of the school year. These absences will result in an intervention referral with possible consultation by trained professionals that support the programs at St. Marys Catholic Elementary School. In addition, a mandatory review and monitoring of ALL co-curricular involvement will take place to determine if participation is in the best interest of the student.
- Finally, if a student exceeds **thirty (30)** days of absence (regardless of medical or other related illness), the student is in serious danger of a successful advancement to the next grade level at the conclusion of the school year. The absence of over twenty (20) percent or thirty-six (36) days of the required one hundred eighty days of school is serious enough to warrant the administration holding a student responsible for repeating an entire year even if the student is able to achieve the minimum standard of seventy (70) percent in core course work. A decision to hold any student back will involve input from the entire administrative team as well as input from any other professionals deemed necessary to serve the interests of the student and the school community.

This attendance policy and philosophy is consistent with Elk County Catholic's mission to provide a holistic education that extends well beyond day-to-day class work and involves the spiritual, social, and emotional learning that is considered paramount to achievement and success of our students.

The complete diocesan attendance policy can be reviewed at this link. (Ctrl + Click)  
<https://www.eriecd.org/images/sections/schools/pdf/pbattendance.pdf>

## HEALTH CARE

### Scent-free Environment

The academic success of a student can be directly linked to his or her health. For this reason, it is imperative that ECCSS insures the well-being and safety of all its students to support a positive learning environment. Strong scents and fragrances can contribute to poor indoor air quality that can be unhealthy to all students and school staff. Allergic and asthmatic patients, as well as those with other conditions, report that certain odors, even in the smallest amounts, can trigger an episode.

Therefore, ECCSS requests that all students and staff refrain from wearing perfume, cologne and other fragrances, and use unscented personal care products in order to promote a scent-free environment. Fragrance products can include: hand sanitizers, cologne, perfume, scented lotions, hair products, candles, air fresheners, and plug-ins, just to name a few. All teachers, students, and staff members are asked not to bring cleaning products, deodorizers or other personal care products into the classroom unless they are identified as fragrance-free.

## Screenings

The following measurements, screenings, and examinations are given in specific grades:

- Height & Weight (including BMI- Body Mass Index):      Annually
- Vision screening:      Annually
- Hearing screening:      Kindergarten or first entry,  
and Grades 1, 2, and 3
  
- Physical exam:      Kindergarten or first entry
- Dental exam:      Kindergarten or first entry  
and Grade 3

The measurements and screenings are done by school nurses. Regarding physical and dental exams, students in the designated grades will be given the exam by the school physician or dentist unless the school is notified in writing by the parent that the examination will be given by a private physician or dentist. A Private Physician Form or Dentist Examination Form must be obtained from the school, completed by the examiner, and returned to the school.

## Medications

*General Procedures* – All medication, whether over-the-counter (OTC) or prescription, must be secured in the health room and be in its original container. Medications in a baggie, etc. will NOT be accepted. The following information should be clearly marked on the container:

- the name of the student
- the name of the physician (if applicable)
- the name of the medication to be given
- the dosage of the medication to be given
- the time(s) the medication should be administered at school

A parent/guardian or responsible adult designated by the parent/guardian should deliver all medications to the Main Office. Students are NOT to transport medications to and from school.

When scheduled to take the medication, the student should report to the health room. All prescription and nonprescription medicines will be administered by the nurse and/or office personnel. The school reserves the right to check with a parent or physician for confirmation of any medication needed.

Common non-prescription medication, i.e. ibuprofen, Tums, will be administered to students only as pre-approved through a *Permission to Give Medication Form* which is sent home to parents annually.

*Over-the-Counter (OTC) Medications* - Whenever possible, this type of medication should be given at home. If required to be administered during school hours, the General Procedures above must be followed and the medication must be accompanied by written directions from the parent.

*Prescription Medications* – If required to be administered during school hours, the General Procedures above will be followed. In addition, students must bring the physician's written order for a prescription along with the prescription in its original container. If a student needs to carry an inhaler, epi-pen, etc., that information must be indicated on the student's medical records. Inhalers and epi-pens must be stored in the health room.

In the event of an emergency, the parent or other specified person will be notified as to the nature of the emergency. If necessary, first aid will be administered and emergency transportation to a medical facility will be provided.

Please use the following guidelines when determining when a student should return to school after exhibiting symptoms.

- Fever – after being fever free for 24 hours **without the use of fever reducing medication**
- Headache – after the headache has subsided
- Active vomiting or diarrhea – 24 hours after the last episode
- Coughing – return once the cough has disappeared or is under control\*
- Sore Throat – return once pain has subsided and child is able to swallow without difficulty\*
- After 24 hours on an antibiotic which may have been prescribed for various bacterial reasons, i.e. strep, pink eye, etc.

\*When deciding about return to school, keep in mind that students are not permitted to have cough drops during the school day.

*You know your child best. Please keep them home if they are sick. This helps prevent the spread of contagious illness to others.*

### **Emergency Drills**

Emergency drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year. Students will become familiar with the directives for each type of crisis.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Regular and open communication among teachers, students, parents/guardians, administrators, and school support groups is essential to the well-being of the school. All



communication among members of the school community should be carried out in the spirit of Christian charity, always remembering that students are children of God and that the Holy Family is the role model for the school.

- Folders are sent home with each child every Thursday. Parents/guardians are encouraged to review the work done by the child and sign the folder. The child is to return the folder the next school day. Office papers are emailed in the e-Folders each Thursday, as well.
- Individual parent/teacher conferences are offered in November. Any parent who wishes to confer with the child's teacher at a time other than the November conferences is encouraged to contact the school office and arrangements will be made.
- Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to communicate to the administration or teachers any circumstances that may adversely impact their child's progress, such as serious illness, death, separation, divorce, or financial hardship that may have a significant and/or adverse effect on a student.
- ECCSS utilizes an emergency notification system to notify parents of school delays, cancellations, and other school emergencies. Voice messages, text messages, and emails can be delivered to parents. Parents are automatically enrolled through our administrative software program.
- Parents/guardians who come to school to pick up/drop off a student during the school day for various appointments are required to stop at the school office. For the safety of the students, visitors must also stop at the school office first.
- Personal student party invitations are permitted to be distributed in school only if all the girls in the class, all the boys in the class, or all the students in the class are invited. This will avoid hurt feelings that arise if some children are excluded.

### **Plus Portals (Web-based Online Communication System)**

The Elk County Catholic School System uses the Plus Portals system, an online portal, in order to post grades online for students (grades one through twelve) and parents. At the beginning of each school year, parents and students will receive activation codes for the school year. We strongly urge parents to utilize this tool to track their child's progress. Plus Portals also permits teachers to post classroom policies, assignments, projects, tests, and other classroom information. In addition to providing information on a student's progress, Plus Portals may contain electronic forms that can be completed online and recognized as legal school documents. It also serves as a communication medium as teacher email addresses are published with each of your child's classes.

Parents are also encouraged to communicate with teachers using their Elk County Catholic School System email addresses. The format for faculty email addresses is last name followed by first initial @eccss.org. For example: John Doe's email address would be doej@eccss.org.

## **Communication/Technology Devices**

Use of communication/technology devices such as beepers, pagers, and laser pointers are not permitted. Students may be in possession of cell phones, however the phone must be turned off during regular school hours and cannot be used to place calls, send text messages, take pictures, play music or games, access the internet or for any other purpose. Phones should be left in the student's backpack or locker during regular school hours. All student phones seen during school hours will be confiscated by ECCSS faculty/staff and will only be returned to the student's parent. Use of cell phones during school field trips is not permitted without the permission of a faculty member/adult supervisor. Use of cell phones during extra-curricular activities is at the discretion of the advisor(s).

Any phone that is discovered to be turned on during regular school hours is subject to being further examined by the school. The purpose of this examination would be to determine whether the phone was used during school hours and to further determine the purpose of that use. If a phone is discovered to be turned on during regular school hours, the person possessing that phone will be considered to have given his/her implicit consent to such a search.

**Acceptable Internet Use Policy** This link (Ctrl + Click) will take you the complete policy for your review.

<http://www.eccss.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/ECCSS-Acceptable-Use-Policy-for-Internet-1.pdf>

## **Telephone**

Students are only permitted to use the telephone in the school office at the discretion of the office personnel. Students are not permitted to use the telephone for personal calls. They will not be called to the telephone during the school day. Important messages will be delivered.

## **Change of Contact Information**

Please inform the main office immediately if there is a change in contact information such as address, telephone number, email, etc.

## **Visitors**

Visits must be arranged through the permission of the Principal. Persons not directly connected with the school are not permitted in the school building or on school grounds without permission. All visitors must report to the main office, sign in, and wear a visitor identification badge.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

### **Inclusion Program**

The focus of this program is to provide students with numerous resources which can be utilized with the classroom, small group instruction, and/or individual instruction to help facilitate academic and social-emotional growth. Some of the services provided within the program include:

- Title I Reading
- Act 89 Math
- Enrichment
- Tutoring
- Classroom differentiation and accommodations
- Speech therapy
- Emotional support dog
- Counseling

The Inclusion program can also provide families with information regarding services outside the school, as well as assist with the referral process. An overview of these programs is provided below:

### **Act 89 Remedial Math and Remedial Reading**

The Act 89 remedial math and remedial reading program is available through the Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit to assist students in grades kindergarten through fifth who are experiencing difficulties in math or reading. Instruction is provided by the teacher in small groups. Students are selected for the program on the basis of teacher referral and standardized test scores and must have parental permission to participate.

### **Act 89 Enrichment**

The Act 89 enrichment program is available through the Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit. It is designed for eligible students in grades 3 – 5 to help improve their thinking skills and problem-solving strategies. Students will work in teams and/or independently to solve puzzles, create solutions, and learn good test-taking strategies.

### **Title I Remedial Reading**

The Title I remedial reading program, which is provided through the St. Marys Area School District, provides remediation and supplemental support to students in grades kindergarten through fifth. It consists of individual or small group instruction with a reading specialist. Entrance into the program is by teacher recommendation, individual evaluation, and parental/guardian permission. A major emphasis of this program is close communication between the Title I teacher, the classroom teacher, and the parents to help students become successful readers.

### **Hearing, Speech, Vision Therapy**

Hearing, speech, and/or vision therapy is provided through the St. Marys Area School District. Routine screenings are conducted at the start of each year for students in grades kindergarten through second. Students who are observed as having speech or language delays or hearing or vision problems affecting academic performance are referred for a complete evaluation. Parental/guardian consent is required in order to proceed with testing. If eligibility is determined, an intervention plan is developed by the parents, teacher, and therapist.

### **The LIFE Program** (Living in Family Environment)

This program is offered through Dickinson Children's Prevention Services. The primary goal of this program is to provide a cooperative network of positive, honest communication between children, families, school and mental health personnel and other social services, thereby enabling students to reach their goals and maintain success throughout every facet of their lives. Students are usually referred to this program by school personnel, but parents may request assistance through school administration or on their own.

### **Counseling Services**

The services of a mental health counselor are available to all students in grades kindergarten through fifth. The intent of the counseling is to help troubled students adjust to and cope with situations either at school or at home. Teachers and/or parents can make referrals. If a teacher refers a child for counseling, the parent will be notified.

### **Bullying Prevention Program**

This program is in place to combat harassment by providing knowledge that can help in changing attitudes and behaviors. The *Get Real About Violence* program is designed to help staff and students together create a school culture and climate in which bullying and harassment are not tolerated.

### **Crisis Response Team**

St. Marys Catholic Elementary School has established a School-based Crisis Response Team. This group has been created to immediately react to any emergency that may occur. Such emergencies include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Fires
- Bomb Threats
- Chemical Emergencies
- Intruders
- Weather Emergencies
- Transportation Emergencies
- Blackouts
- Unexpected Deaths

Members of the team include administrators, faculty, and staff (clerical, maintenance, cafeteria). These individuals have received specialized training in dealing with school-related emergencies.

In addition to the establishment of the teams, policy handbooks that list procedures to be followed in the event of a crisis have been created. For example, in the event of a

bomb threat, specific procedures have been created in order to ensure the absolute safety of the students. Such procedures include evacuation of the students, strategies for secretaries, recording of information, contacting the police, notification of parents, transportation plans, and so on. For security reasons, it is not recommended that the specific procedures be distributed publicly. However, if you have any questions concerning the Crisis Response Teams or Policy Handbooks, you are asked to personally contact an administrator. Please know that SMCES has plans in place that will respond to any crisis in a manner that will ensure the health and safety of all within our school community.

## **BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT POLICY**

A Behavior Management policy will be implemented to improve the safety of the students, teachers and preservation of school property so that teaching and learning can occur with little or no disruption.

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods of behavioral management of children. SMCES uses a positive approach to discipline and practices the following behavior management techniques.

- Communicate to children using positive statements
- Communicate to children on their level
- Talk with children in a calm and quiet manner
- Explain unacceptable behavior to children
- Give attention to children for positive behavior
- Praise and encourage children
- Reason with and set limits for children
- Clearly communicate rules and expectations to children on their level
- Apply rules consistently
- Model appropriate behavior
- Set up the classroom to prevent potential problems
- Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activities
- Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems
- Help children talk out problems and think of solutions
- Listen to children and respect the children's needs, desires and feelings
- Provide appropriate word to help solve conflicts
- Use stories and discussion to work through common conflicts

However, if a child's behavior consistently endangers the safety of the students and/or staff and/or disrupts the learning environment of the classroom, the Inclusion Coordinator will schedule a mandatory meeting with parents/guardians to develop an individualized behavior plan that outlines an appropriate course of action to accomplish determined goals. This plan could include goals to seek assistance with outside agencies in order to best serve the child and the family.

If the child continues with aggressive and/or disruptive behaviors and there is a lack of parental cooperation after a documented amount of time with the individualized plan in place, a meeting will be scheduled with parents to discuss alternative educational and behavioral services for that child.

Note: If, at any point, there is an indication that a child may have special needs, the Inclusion Coordinator will meet with the child's parents/guardians to discuss further assessments and assistance.

## **CONDUCT**

Good conduct is emphasized at all times so that the child will form proper habits and attitudes to become a better Christian and citizen. Some of the rules we expect our students to observe are as follows:

- obedience to authority
- respect for all
- trustworthiness and fair play
- neatness in person and work
- courtesy to all
- proper application to school work at all times
- proper safety habits

The above list is not exclusive. The teacher represents the parent/guardian in the classroom (*in loco parentis*) and is primarily responsible for student discipline. Serious discipline problems or continuous and deliberate minor discipline problems will be brought to the attention of the administration. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken for unacceptable student conduct. Please note that school rules are in full effect not only during the school day but on the way to or from school, or during any school sponsored activity, whether on site or off school grounds.

### **Smoking/Tobacco Use**

Smoking or any tobacco use on the school premises at any time is against both Pennsylvania School Law and the fire regulations of St. Marys. Offenses in this area of concern are considered grave and are addressed individually according to established policies.

### **Alcohol and Drugs**

The ECCSS recognizes that the misuse of alcohol, drugs, and mood-altering substances is a serious problem with legal, moral, physical, and social implications for the entire school community, and in particular for the child. The use, possession, or distribution by students of any alcohol, drug, or mood-altering substance during school hours, on school property at any time, and/or at any school sponsored event is prohibited.

Through the use of a specific curriculum, special activities, community support and resources, a strong and consistent administrative and faculty effort, rehabilitative guidance, and disciplinary procedures, each school will work to educate, prevent, and intervene in the use and abuse of all alcohol, drug, or mood-altering substances by the entire student body.

As an extension of this policy, a set of guidelines will be used by all school personnel when responding to alcohol, drug, or mood-altering substance situations. Offenses in

this area of concern are considered grave and are addressed individually according to established policies.

### **Weapons**

It is forbidden for anyone to possess a weapon of any type on Elk County Catholic School System property or at an Elk County Catholic School System sponsored event held off-grounds. Offenses in this area of concern are considered grave and are addressed individually according to established policies.

### **Threats**

A threat is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. A threat can be spoken, written, or symbolic (e.g., motioning with one's hands as though shooting at another person). When an incident is deemed a threat, a Threat Assessment Team is assembled and reacts according to diocesan policy. Offenses in this area of concern are considered grave and are addressed individually according to established policies.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

A discipline policy will be implemented to help improve the school environment so teaching and learning can occur with little or no disruption. If a child is misbehaving or acting inappropriately, he/she will be given a verbal warning the first time and then a written discipline report stating the infraction each subsequent time. If the student receives three discipline reports, he/she will be assigned detention. Detention will be held for one hour after school with an assigned teacher. Parents will be notified concerning the date and time of the detention.

If a student serves numerous detentions, he/she will not be permitted to participate in upcoming field trips. This behavior may also determine that a student shall be ineligible to participate in an outside school-connected sport activity until that conduct improves. Parental support in this endeavor helps develop responsible students.

### **In-school Suspension**

An in-school suspension is the temporary deprivation of the privileges and benefits that are afforded to the students. This includes participation in extracurricular activities or athletic activities throughout the entire period the student is assigned to an in-school suspension. Students assigned to an in-school suspension will be charged a fee per day to cover the supervisory costs associated with an in-school suspension.

1. The student is to report to the designated area at the regular starting time and remain in that area until the close of the school day, at which time he/she must vacate the premises.
2. The student will not be permitted in any other area of the school. This includes the cafeteria.

3. Regular school attire is to be worn.
4. The student will complete the classroom work assigned.

### **Out-of-school Suspension**

An out-of-school suspension may replace an in-school suspension if circumstances warrant such an action. A student placed in an out-of-school suspension is not permitted on school property during the time of suspension nor is the student permitted to participate in any school activities on or off site.

In rare cases, it is possible that circumstances could result in immediate dismissal from the school. If warranted, the school may suggest and initiate appropriate psychological counseling, if parental consent is given, for a student in need of assistance.

### **Search and Seizure**

School officials have the right to question students, search their desks, property, or person, inspect the contents therein, and retain suspected material, providing the administration has reasonable suspicion. It is the policy to search randomly any student and/or his/her property prior to field trips.

### **Legal Proceedings**

If a school official is subpoenaed to appear at a court hearing or any other legal or administrative proceeding, the official will comply.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **School Bus**

Bus transportation is provided for the students through the St. Marys Area School District with payment through tax dollars. Students who live at least one mile from the school are eligible for this service. The bus schedule is posted at the beginning of each school year on the SMASD website.

Any request for a permanent change in the transportation schedule may be made by completing the proper form available at the St. Marys Area School District Transportation Office or on the SMASD website. Please note that if your child is **not** picked up or dropped off at your home address, you must complete a change form with the school district.

Any student wishing to ride a bus other than the one to which he/she is assigned for one day must have a parent excuse and a bus change form, signed by school personnel, to be presented to the driver when boarding the bus. The bus change forms are available at our school office.

Repeated or serious misconduct on the bus or at the bus stop will be cause for loss of bus privileges.



## Personal vehicle

Car safety is very important on and near school grounds. Drivers are asked to drive very slowly when entering the parking lot at the beginning and/or end of each school day and at any other time when children are in the playground.

## Changes in transportation

If a student is going home other than in his/her usual way, a note or telephone call to the school is required.

## LUNCH PROGRAM

Our school participates in the National School Lunch Program, a federally assisted meal program. It provides nutritionally balanced low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. The lunches must meet federal nutrition requirements.

ECCSS offers parents the ability to manage their child(ren)'s cafeteria account over the Internet by using [payschoolscentral.com](http://payschoolscentral.com). It can be accessed via the [eccss.org](http://eccss.org) website or via [payschoolscentral.com](http://payschoolscentral.com). With [payschoolscentral.com](http://payschoolscentral.com), parents can log in at any time to make a deposit to their child's account, view their child's account balance, set up recurring deposits to their child's account, set up e-mail notifications when their child's account falls below a certain dollar amount, or request a report showing what the child has purchased on their account.

If you choose not to use [payschoolscentral.com](http://payschoolscentral.com) for transactions, ECCSS will continue to accept payments at each school cafeteria. Please note that payment by check is the preferred method. Checks should be made payable to ECCSS Cafeteria. When sending cafeteria/milk money for the child(ren), the parent/guardian should mark on the envelope each child's name, homeroom number, amount for each account and PIN number if known. *Note: It is requested that cafeteria/milk payments and tuition payments be made separately as they are recorded by different personnel in different offices.*

Additional information:

- Families who qualify are encouraged to apply for the free or reduced price lunch program. Application does not place any burden on the school. Application forms are sent to parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year and are available online at [www.eccss.org](http://www.eccss.org) or at the school office during the year.
- If a student has a medical condition that requires a special diet, the cafeteria is required to meet that student's needs. In such cases, documentation (a doctor's excuse stating the medical condition necessitating a special diet), must be provided.

- Students may choose to carry their lunch or eat in the cafeteria on a daily basis.
- Because the cafeteria must operate with volunteers in order to be cost-effective, parents, grandparents, and friends of the school are encouraged to volunteer in the cafeteria.

## **SPORTS PROGRAMS**

### **Mission**

The mission of the ECCSS sports programs is to strengthen our student athletes in good sportsmanship, fair play, and honest competition while bringing them closer together as part of God's redeemed people.

### **Philosophy**

The principles of growth in academics and Christian values for each student that the SMCES serves are in accordance with the philosophy of the school system. To maintain this mission to the best of the school system's ability requires the school to remain steadfast on its academic and spiritual course in all matters related to educational efforts.

### **Policy**

In order for the mission to be strong and viable, the sports programs that involve SMCES students should be aware of this mission and cooperate in its implementation for the long-term development of our students. All sports programs should be avenues which teach Christian values and take a stance to develop the full potential of every participant.

SMCES encourages sports organizations, in which students and parents participate, to develop and maintain guidelines which reinforce the vision that is central to this mission.

Sports guidelines that are formulated as a complement to this policy are presented as principles from which pastors, principals, teachers, coaches, and parents should act when dealing with children. Guidelines consistent with these beliefs will serve to strengthen the programs and train the children for life.

### **Guidelines**

1. Directors, coaches, and parents shall reinforce the principle that academics come first.
2. Directors, coaches, and parents are encouraged to support the efforts of the schools in carrying out policies that are fair and in the best interest of our children.
3. The least amount of school time missed for an outside activity is the most desirable.

4. When students are released during school hours for out-of-school activities, it is the responsibility of the students to make arrangements for and be accountable for missed schoolwork.
5. At the elementary school level, if a student shows a consistent pattern of declining effort and/or conduct, and normal efforts to help that student are not effective, then the principal, in consultation with the student's teachers, may determine that the student shall be ineligible to participate in an outside sport activity until that effort/conduct improves.
6. These programs provide an avenue to teach Christian values of competition and/or performance. They help young people achieve a balance in their lives in order to attain what is good and right and possible in healthy competition.
7. These programs provide for children an excellent opportunity to teach the youth by giving them good example and helping them to form positive values. The behavior and attitudes of directors, coaches, parents, and fans, therefore, should reflect the same.
8. Each organization shall develop the full potential of each participant by establishing guidelines for involvement of each participant during the activities. Children in their formative years need encouragement.

Schools, organizations, and parents should work cooperatively in establishing guidelines that will be enforced with consistency. Communication between the organizations and the schools is highly recommended.

## **STUDENT DRESS CODE**

The purpose of the Student Dress Code Policy is to clearly define acceptable student attire and to promote an atmosphere conducive to academic success. While the goal is to maintain consistency throughout the district, it is important to note that the following policy may be supplemented by specific building rules.

There are many details and styles of clothing that cannot be covered in the dress code. It is hoped that students and parents understand not only the "letter" but the "spirit" of the dress code and choose clothing that is appropriate for students attending St. Marys Catholic Elementary School.

The administration maintains the right to make the final determination concerning the appropriateness of any student's attire.

**All pants, shorts, shirts, blouses, polos, and sweaters must be of the conventional uniform style so as to match those available from Flynn and O'Hara Uniform Company.**

## GIRLS DRESS CODE

<b>JUMPER</b>	Maroon plaid jumper available from Flynn and O'Hara. The length of the jumper shall be no more than 3 inches above the knee.
<b>BLOUSE</b>	Solid white short-sleeve or long-sleeve front button-down blouse. Blouses can be worn with the jumper, pants, and shorts. Blouses must be long enough to be tucked in at all times.
<b>POLO</b>	Solid white short-sleeve or long-sleeve polo. Polos can be worn with the jumper, pants, and shorts. Polos must be long enough to be tucked in at all times.
<b>PANTS</b>	Khaki dress pants. Pants should not have outside sewn or cargo pockets, heavy seams, rivets. Material should not be stretch fabric or be form fitting.
<b>SHORTS</b>	Khaki dress shorts. Shorts should not have outside pockets and be no more than 3 inches above the knee and no longer than 1 inch below the knee. Shorts may be worn during the warmer weather which is from the first day of school until October 15 and then again from April 15 through the end of the school year.
<b>BELT</b>	Black or brown belts (optional)
<b>SWEATER</b>	Solid gray or white cardigan sweaters. Sweaters can be worn all year long.
<b>SWEATSHIRT</b>	Predominately maroon crew neck or hooded sweatshirt with ECCSS logo. Approved items are available for sale from the ECCSS PTO or Dave's Pro Shop. Sweatshirts can be worn all year long.  Please note: Hooded sweatshirts are NOT an approved dress code item in the middle and high school.
<b>QUARTER-ZIP</b>	Solid maroon quarter-zip with the ECCSS logo. This item is available for sale from the ECCSS PTO or Dave's Pro Shop. Quarter-zip can be worn all year.
<b>SOCKS</b>	Solid color maroon, white, black, brown, gray or tan socks, tights or hose. Socks should be visible above the shoe. No designs are permitted.
<b>SHOES</b>	Solid color white, black, brown, gray or tan shoes cut below the ankle with a heel or platform height of no more than 1½ inches when measured at the back of the shoe. Shoes must be tied snugly using all the eyelets. Plaid and metallic colored shoes, boots, clogs, crocs, sandals, moccasins, open-toes or open-heels shoes are not permitted.
<b>SNEAKERS</b>	Conventional style sneakers should be predominantly white, black, brown, gray or tan. Sneakers should be tied snugly using all eyelets. Solid neon or light up shoes are not permitted.

**HAIR**

Hair should be kept neat and clean at all times. Eyes must be visible. Hair must be complementary to your natural color. No unnatural hair colors or outlandish hair styles. Students may not make drastic changes to hair color, i.e. extremely light to dark or the reverse. Highlights, lowlights, or streaks that drastically differ from your primary hair color or not permitted.

Bows, clips, and headbands that do not cause a distraction are permitted. Headbands must be flat to the head with no raised attachments, i.e. animal ears.

If a student chooses to be creative with their hair color or style over the summer, there is no acceptable "grow out" period. All hair color and/or styles must be restored as to adhere to the handbook guidelines before the first day of school.

**JEWELRY**

Earrings: Matched set posts with a maximum of one earring per ear. No bars or gauges.

Necklaces: Only religious medals or scapulars which are worn underneath clothing

Watches: One only. Either a wristwatch or Fitbit. No Apple or Smart watches are permitted unless deemed medically necessary.

Message bracelets: One with appropriate message only. No other bracelets are permitted.

Rings: One ring per hand

No ankle bracelets permitted.

Only religious buttons and pins

No visible body piercings or tattoos

No stickers or buttons may be worn on the uniform unless permission has been granted by the administration.

**NAILS**

No black polish or fake fingernails

**MAKE-UP**

No visible make-up

**GROOMING**

Neat and clean

No visible tattoos (fake or real)

No writing or drawing on the skin

<b>BOYS DRESS CODE</b>
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**POLO**

Solid maroon/burgundy short-sleeve or long-sleeve polo. Polos must be long enough to be tucked in at all times.

**PANTS**

Khaki dress pants. Pants should not have outside sewn or cargo pockets, heavy seams, rivets.

**SHORTS**

Khaki dress shorts. Shorts should not have outside pockets and should be no more than 2 inches above the knee and no longer than 1 inch below

the knee. Shorts may be worn during the warmer weather dress code period which is from the first day of school until October 15 and then again from April 15 through the end of the school year.

**BELT** Black or brown belts (optional)

**SWEATER** Solid maroon pullover V-neck sweaters available from Flynn & O'Hara

**SWEATSHIRT** Predominately maroon crew neck or hooded sweatshirt with ECCSS logo. Approved items are available for sale from the ECCSS PTO or Dave's Pro Shop. Sweatshirts can be worn all year long.

Please note: Hooded sweatshirts are NOT an approved dress code item in the middle and high school.

**QUARTER-ZIP** Solid maroon quarter-zip with the ECCSS logo. This item is available for sale from the ECCSS PTO and Dave's Pro Shop. Quarter-zip can be worn all year.

**SOCKS** Solid color white, black, brown, gray or tan socks. Socks should be visible above the shoe. No designs are permitted.

**SHOES** Solid color black, brown, gray or tan shoes cut below the ankle with a heel or platform height of no more than 1½ inches when measured at the back of the shoe. Shoes must be tied snugly using all the eyelets. Plaid and metallic colored shoes, boots, sandals, crocs, and moccasins are not permitted.

**SNEAKERS** Conventional style sneakers should be predominantly white, black, brown, gray or tan. Sneakers should be tied snugly using all eyelets. Solid neon or light up shoes are not permitted.

**HATS** Hats are to be removed when in the building.

**HAIR** Hair should be kept neat and clean at all times. Hair must be cut above the collar, ears, and eyebrows. Hair must be complementary to your natural color. No unnatural hair colors or outlandish hair styles. Shaving of the head shorter than ¼ inch, designs, steps, or visible lines are not permitted. Students may not make drastic changes to hair color, i.e. extremely light to dark or the reverse. Highlights, lowlights, or streaks that drastically differ from your primary hair color are not permitted.

If a student chooses to be creative with their hair color or style over the summer, there is no acceptable "grow out" period. All hair color and/or styles must be restored as to adhere to the handbook guidelines before the first day of school.

**JEWELRY** Earrings: Earrings, bars, or gauges are not permitted.  
Necklaces: Only religious medals or scapulars which are worn underneath clothing  
Watches: One only. Either a wristwatch or Fitbit. No Apple or Smart watches are permitted unless deemed medically necessary.

Message bracelets: One with appropriate message only. No other bracelets are permitted.  
No ankle bracelets permitted  
No rings are permitted  
Only religious buttons and pins  
No visible body piercings or tattoos  
No stickers or buttons may be worn on the uniform unless permission has been granted by the administration.

**GROOMING** Keep a neat and clean appearance at all times.  
No visible tattoos (fake or real)  
No writing or drawing on the skin

### **GYM UNIFORM (BOYS AND GIRLS)**

The gym uniform is worn to school and throughout the day on a student's scheduled gym day. Uniforms may be purchased from Dave's Pro Shop or from the ECCSS PTO. (If purchased elsewhere, it should be comparable in color and style.) In order to participate in gym class, each student is expected to adhere to the dress code.

**SHIRTS** Solid gold t-shirt or any gold T-shirt with ECCSS logo. Shirts should be long enough to reach at least to the top of the thigh, but should not be longer than the shorts.

**SHORTS** Black shorts either solid or with a stripe along the side. Shorts should be fingertip length. No wording of any kind across the seat of the shorts. Shorts may be worn during the warmer weather dress code period which is from the first day of school until October 15 and then again from April 15 through the end of the school year.

**PANTS** Black athletic pants, wind pants, or sweatpants either solid black or with a stripe along the side. Pants with ECCSS logo are acceptable. No snaps or zippers on the pants. No wording of any kind across the seat of the pants.

Note: During the winter dress code, students may wear gym shorts underneath their pants. The shorts can then be worn during gym class.

**SNEAKERS** See the dress code above for permitted colors. Please be sure sneakers have non-marking soles and are not slip-on. They must be securely tied when participating in gym activities.

### **HARASSMENT POLICY**

Elk County Catholic School System is committed to providing a workplace free of sexual harassment as well as harassment based on such factors as race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, disability, or veteran status. The School strongly disapproves of and will not tolerate harassment of employees, students, or visitors by any supervisor or employee. The School will also protect employees from non-employees and students in the workplace.

**Harassment** includes verbal, physical, and visual conduct as well as written material that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile working or academic environment or that interferes with work performance of employees or students. Harassment includes but is not limited to physical or mental abuse, insults, slurs, jokes, posters of a disturbing nature, subtle pressure for sexual activity, unwelcome sexual advances or touching or requests for sexual favors, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, sex, national origin, age, or handicap/disability. Any material appearing on a website, blog, online message, e-mail, or any other form of online computer communication or cell phones that is of a nature as outlined above is also considered to be harassment, whether it originates inside or outside of ECCSS.

**Ethnic harassment** includes the use of any derogatory word, phrase, or action characterizing a given racial or ethnic group that creates an offensive working environment.

**Sexual harassment** shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct of a sexual nature is a term of condition of an individual's continued employment or academic progress.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for academic or work decisions affecting the individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

Examples of **sexual harassment** include but are not limited to sexual flirtations, advances, touching, or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body, sexually degrading words to describe an individual, jokes, pin-ups, calendars, objects, graffiti, vulgar statements, abusive language, innuendoes, references to sexual activities, overt sexual conduct, or any conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's ability to work or learn or which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment.

Harassment refers to behavior that is personally offensive, that disables morale, or interferes with the work or academic performance of its victims. Any students or employees who believe themselves to be the objects of actions prohibited by this policy are strongly urged to report these violations.

Any incident or harassment, including work-related harassment by any School employee or harassment by or against students should promptly be reported to that employee's supervisor and to the Principal, who is responsible for investigating the matter. Supervisors who receive such complaints should immediately report the incident to the Principal. An employee may also report such incidents of harassment directly to the President, especially when a supervisor is involved in the harassment.

Every complaint of harassment that is reported to the Principal will be investigated thoroughly, promptly, and in as confidential a manner as possible. In addition, the School will not tolerate retaliation against any employee or student for making a complaint.



The School considers any report of harassment to be serious. Thus, anyone found to have brought a false charge of harassment as a form of reckless defamation of another's character will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment or dismissal as a student.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Employees and students who believe that they are being harassed are encouraged to firmly and promptly notify the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome. Elk County Catholic School System also recognizes that differences in position of the alleged harasser and an alleged victim may make such confrontation impossible or impractical. In the event that this type of direct communication between individuals is ineffective, any student or employee who feels that he or she has been made a victim of harassment should take the following steps to report any complaints.

1. An employee or student shall report a complaint of harassment, orally or in writing, to their immediate supervisor or the Principal, who shall inform the employee or student of his/her rights and of the complaint process. In the event that an initial report is made orally, the Principal shall request that the complaint be put in writing before an investigation is initiated and resolution achieved. This process is not intended to discourage reporting, but rather is designed to insure that all parties are aware of the specific allegations of any complaint. If the alleged victim refuses to put the complaint in writing, the Principal shall prepare a written statement which summarizes the oral complaint.
2. The Principal immediately shall notify the President, and the Principal shall initiate an impartial, thorough and confidential investigation of the alleged harassment within five (5) working days of notification. In the event that the Principal is the subject of the complaint, the complaint shall be directed to the President to conduct the investigation. If necessary, in the case of sexual harassment, the Principal (or President) may designate another employee of the opposite sex to assist him or her in the investigation, where possible. The investigation shall include an interview with the student(s) or employee(s) who made the initial report and the person(s) toward who the suspected harassment was directed. The student(s) or employee(s) suspected or accused of harassment shall also be interviewed if the Principal (or President) determines that there is sufficient evidence to believe that some form of harassment may have occurred. Any other person who may have information regarding the alleged harassment may also be interviewed. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment, the totality of the circumstances, nature of the conduct, and context in which the alleged conduct occurred shall be investigated.
3. The Principal (or President) shall prepare a written report within twenty (20) working days of his/her notification of the suspected harassment summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint unless extenuating circumstances prevent him/her from doing so. The report shall include a finding that harassment occurred, harassment did not occur, or there is inconclusive evidence as to whether harassment occurred. Copies of the report shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, the President and others directly involved, as appropriate.

4. If the investigation results in a substantiated charge of harassment, the School shall take prompt corrective action to ensure the harassment ceases and will not recur.
5. Every effort shall be made to keep all matters related to the investigation and the various reports confidential. Elk County Catholic School System will maintain written records for one (1) year from the date of the resolution of the complaint unless new circumstances dictate that the file should be kept for a longer period of time.
6. Elk County Catholic School System encourages the prompt reporting of complaints so that rapid response and appropriate action may be taken. However, due to the sensitivity of these problems and because of the emotional toll such misconduct may have on any individual, no limited time frame will be instituted for reporting harassment complaints. Delayed reporting of complaints will not, in and of itself, preclude the School from taking remedial action. However, delays in the reporting of complaints may adversely impact the investigation and, thus, prompt reporting is encouraged.
7. The School will not, in any way, retaliate against an individual who makes a report of sexual or other harassment or permit any management or supervisory employee to do so. Retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and should be reported immediately. Any person found to have retaliated against another individual for reporting harassment will be subject to the same disciplinary action provided for the actual harassment offenders.

### **Discipline**

A substantiated charge against an employee shall subject such employee to disciplinary action, including discharge.

A substantiated charge against a student shall subject such student to disciplinary action, consistent with the student discipline code, and may include exclusion from educational activities and/or counseling services related to unlawful harassment and/or dismissal from the school.

If it is concluded that an employee has made false accusations, such employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.

In the case of harassment by School employees, if harassment is established, the School will administer Corrective Action with the offender. Corrective Action for a violation of this policy may range from written warnings up to and including immediate discharge, depending on the circumstances. With regard to acts of harassment by non-employees, corrective action will be taken after consultation with appropriate legal authorities.

### **Appeal Procedure**

1. If the complainant or accused is not satisfied with the Principal's decision, he/she may file a written appeal to the President within ten (10) working days of the resolution of the charge by the Principal.

2. The President shall review the initial investigation and report and may also conduct a reasonable investigation. The President shall prepare a written response to the appeal within thirty (30) working days. Copies of the response shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, the Principal and others directly involved, as appropriate. In the event that the Principal was the subject of the complaint, the decision of the President shall be final.
3. In the event the complainant of harassment accuses the President, the appeal from the Principal's determination shall be to the Board of Trustees of the School, which shall review the initial investigation and report and may also conduct a reasonable investigation. The Board shall prepare a written response to the appeal within thirty (30) working days.
4. The decision of the President (or the Board) on appeal shall be final.

## **POLICY FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

In the Charter for the protection of Children and Young People, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops reminds us that Jesus extended his care in a tender and urgent way to children. He rebuked his disciples for keeping them away from him: "Let the children come to me" (Mt 19:14). He uttered a grave warning about anyone who would lead the little ones astray.

It is with compassion and care that the Diocese of Erie addresses the issue of child abuse. The Diocese wants to ensure that all of its programs for children are conducted in a safe environment.

The complete diocesan policy for the Protection of Children can be found at this link (Ctrl + Click):

<https://www.eriercd.org/images/sections/childprotection/pdf/CURRENTPolicy.pdf>

## **TITLE IX**

While reserving the right to make religious exceptions as provided by law and in accord with Catholic religious belief, the Catholic schools within the Diocese of Erie do not discriminate on the basis of sex. This includes being excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity on the basis of sex.

Elk County Catholic School System has designated and authorized the following employee as the Title IX Coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of sex, including sexual harassment and retaliation.

Title IX Coordinator: Kim Schlimm  
Physical Address: 600 Maurus Street, Saint Marys, PA 15857  
Telephone Number: 814-834-7800  
Email: [schlimmk@eccss.org](mailto:schlimmk@eccss.org)

Any individual may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, at any time, including during non-business hours, by mail, phone, or email. During district business hours, reports may also be made in person.

To view an electronic copy of the ECCSS's Title IX policies please go to:  
[www.eccss.org](http://www.eccss.org)

### **STUDENT WELLNESS POLICY**

Student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical wellbeing, growth, development, and readiness to learn. Catholic schools in the Diocese of Erie are committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement and their overall well-being.

The ECCSS Student Wellness Policy can be found at this link (Ctrl + Click):  
<https://www.eriecd.org/images/sections/schools/pdf/pbwellness.pdf>

### **HELP US SAVE & RECYCLE TO BENEFIT OUR SCHOOLS**

Parents, friends, neighbors, family, teachers, and staff are asked to save **General Mills "Box Tops for Education"**, used **cell phones**, and **empty printer cartridges**. These items all result in redemption value for the schools, either as cash or educational materials and programs. Thank you!

# Rights and Responsibilities of a Student

I have a **right** to be treated with kindness in this room;

This means that no one will laugh at me,  
tease or insult me.

I have the **responsibility** to treat my classmates with kindness.

I have a **right** to be myself in this room;

This means that no one will treat me unfairly because  
I am fat or thin, fast or slow, boy or girl.

I have the **responsibility** to allow my classmates to be themselves.

I have a **right** to be safe in this room;

This means that no one will threaten me, bully me,  
push me, or destroy my property.

I have the **responsibility** to behave in a manner that provides a safe environment for my classmates.

I have a **right** to learn about myself in this room;

This means that I will be free to express my feelings  
and my opinions without being interrupted or criticized.

I have the **responsibility** to listen to my classmates.