

Middle School

CREED

We are committed to honesty, justice, and learning. We respect the dignity and worth of all human beings - their thoughts, feelings, and their individuality. We seek to celebrate and share the joy and creativity that emanate from the love of God. We strive to be responsible and contributing members of our families, our school community, and the world

ATTENDANCE

Absences Due to Illness

During absences of one to two days, students are responsible for securing assignments. They should check the web site and contact their classmates. In the case of absences of more than two days, the student should contact their advisor to help collect assignments. Generally, students are granted the same number of days as they were absent to make up work..

Planned Absences

Vacations and trips which pull students away from their classes are strongly discouraged so as to preserve the integrity of every academic day. Therefore, St. Margaret's assumes no responsibility for make-up work due to such absences. Prior to the absence, students must complete a planned absence form obtained from the teaching assistants or the Middle School Secretary. The faculty will not provide work to the student prior to the absence. At the discretion of the teacher, tests, quizzes and all other work may be made up on the day of the return. All work assigned during the vacation may also be due on the day of the return to school. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with his or her teachers prior to the absence.

Long term projects that are due during the absence will be due prior to the student leaving. Projects turned in after their return, but were due during the absence, will be considered late.

Attendance Procedures

Students must check in at the attendance window for a pass if they arrive later than 8:00 a.m. The attendance officer (ext. 249) keeps precise records of all late arrivals for the information of the Middle School Principal. If a parent needs to pick up their student during the school day, the parent needs to come to the attendance office in Highland Hall to sign out their student. When the parent arrives, a member of the office staff will call the classroom to alert the student. Students will remain in class until the parent arrives at the attendance office.

Tardy Policy

Students who accumulate more than three tardies in a class will receive the following consequences:

3 tardies- a letter is sent home

4 tardies- a detention is assigned

5 tardies- no higher than a 4 in effort for that quarter.

CAMPUS LIFE

Grades

The letter/point-average system of grading is illustrated below:

A = 4 A- = 3.7

B+ = 3.3 B = 3 B- = 2.7

C+ = 2.3 C = 2 C- = 1.7

D+ = 1.3 D = 1 D- = .7

All grade evaluations are based on the school's percentage grade scale, maintaining the tradition and philosophy of high academic standards. The course grade reflects an average of all areas of the subject.

Report Cards

Official report cards are mailed home each semester, with quarterly progress reports being sent home every nine weeks. Academic probation may occur if a student has earned a grade below a C- average in two or more classes. Parents can expect to receive detailed narrative report cards at the end of the first and third quarters.

Exams, Quizzes, and Tests

Quizzes and tests are scheduled throughout the year as deemed advisable by the teacher. Sixth grade students may have no more than one test per day. Seventh and eighth grade students may have no more than two tests per day. Concurrent long term projects are avoided when possible.

Final exams serve both as an evaluation tool and a valuable learning experience. Final exams (in grades 7 and 8 only) are administered at the end of each semester. Those days are also reserved for the last unit test of the quarter for the sixth grade. It is not possible for students to take an exam before the scheduled time.

Homework Policy

Teachers assign daily homework assignments that take an average of 20-30 minutes per subject to complete. Since classes meet only four times a week, teachers give assignments over the weekend. Each teacher posts his or her assignments, tests, and quizzes for the week on the web page by Monday afternoon. This page is an invaluable resource for parents as it contains the weekly assignments, the test calendar, copies of important documents, as well as announcements for the week.

Lockers

Each student will be provided with a combination lock for their book locker. At the end of the school year, it is required that all lockers are cleaned out, returned to their original appearance, and all locks are removed. The Physical Education Department will provide locks for P.E. lockers.

Lost Articles

St. Margaret's is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Clothing and possessions must be marked clearly with your name; valuable items are not permitted on campus. The Middle School lost and found is located in Highland Hall. The lost and found is cleaned out before long school vacations: Thanksgiving, Christmas, semester break and summer vacation. Unclaimed uniforms and miscellaneous unlabeled articles will be donated. Please mark your clothing and personal items.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The rules and guidelines outlined below were generated by our consistent and earnest quest to define what it means to live responsibly and respectfully. The school expects each parent and child to carefully read and review this parent handbook and the student Code of Conduct found in the student assignment planner.

MAJOR RULES

Violation of these rules is a fundamental breach of conduct and multiple detentions, suspension, multiple-day suspensions, or expulsion may occur.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

It is the assumption that any work presented by students will be their own.

Academic dishonesty in any form by members of our school community is inconsistent with the school's philosophy and will not be tolerated.

Cheating on a quiz, test, project, homework, or examination includes any case of assistance sought, received, or offered without permission from the teacher. It also includes the unauthorized possession of a previous test or teacher materials which would give the student an unfair advantage.

Plagiarism is defined as using someone else's words, ideas, or facts and passing them off as one's own. Changing one or two words is still plagiarism as the idea or fact is not the unique creation of the student. Failure to credit the source of those ideas, words, or facts properly constitutes an act of plagiarism. Computerized information taken from another source may never be imported into one's document without proper citation.

The consequences for academic dishonesty are as follows:

- The teacher will inform the parents, the grade level dean, and the principal.
- The student may receive a zero on the assignment.
- The student will most likely receive a one day suspension. All work missed during the suspension will receive a two grade deduction.

Additional disciplinary action may be imposed as deemed appropriate by the principal.

Subsequent offenses result in more serious consequences such as longer term suspensions or expulsion.

THE PERSONAL RIGHTS OF OTHERS

Unacceptable behavior includes:

Bullying, hazing, and intimidation

Foul language

Lewd, indecent, or obscene conduct

Threatening physical violence to a student or teacher

Knowingly publishing or circulating false information that is damaging to another person (e.g., spreading a false or hurtful rumor)

Ethnic, racial, religious, and sexual slurs and slurs regarding physical differences

Sexual harassment - (unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual nature). Conduct must be considered by a reasonable person, of the same gender as the victim, to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Fighting - problem solving must use non-violent and non-coercive means. Students may be suspended for fighting.

The consequences for any of the above described behavior are as follows:

1. The principal, assistant principal or dean will meet with the student and then will notify and meet with the student's parents.
2. The student will most likely receive a one day suspension. All work missed during the suspension will receive a two grade deduction.

PROPERTY RIGHTS

Stealing and vandalism in any form, including the unauthorized “borrowing” of another’s belongings, the removal of food from the school kitchen, the removal of school sporting equipment, the removal of anything from the classroom without the teacher’s expressed consent, the unauthorized removal of library materials, or the removal of lost and found items are not permitted. It is not permissible to touch another person’s property, including lockers, teachers’ desks, personal property, and computer work stations unless authorized to do so.

Defacement of school or personal property includes destroying, writing on, sticking gum on buildings, computers, desks, furniture, walls, lockers, chairs, and campaign posters. Inappropriate messages written in yearbooks are also forbidden. The consequences for such action will require restitution as well as written apologies, work details and more severe measures depending on the severity of the action.

PERSONAL INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Cutting class will result in an automatic one-day suspension.

Lying to a teacher, principal, or another adult to avoid punishment for a wrongdoing is a serious offense.

Forging a parent’s signature will result in serious consequences.

Misrepresenting oneself in order to secure a hot lunch is serious dishonesty.

Intentional disruption of school activities will not be allowed.

Disorderly conduct of any kind is prohibited.

Gambling is prohibited.

Using on-line computer services to acquire or view sexually explicit or violent material is a serious offense. Rules and consequences are outlined in the network acceptable use contract.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES

SMES prohibits the possession, use, dispensing, selling, or giving of any alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or weapons (including toy replicas). This policy is in force at any school function and school-related function either on or off the campus.

CLOSED CAMPUS

St. Margaret’s is a closed campus. All students must remain on campus during the school day. Students are not permitted to use the gate behind the portables. Before leaving campus during the school day, the parent must sign the student out at the Middle School office. Students may not leave the campus and be picked up by a parent at another location, nor may they leave the campus and return to be picked up at school. All students are to be picked up and dropped off on the school campus.

— H A N D B O O K —

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

Middle School students are permitted on campus before and after school. Direct supervision is provided from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. The privilege of being on campus before or after school (other than for a club, sports team, drama, etc.) is revocable. Virtually all rules are in effect after hours as well. Students here after 3:00 p.m. who are not involved in a school sponsored event must conduct themselves with the highest degree of responsibility and respect. Students who stay on campus past 3:30 must report to the library and continue working there.

DAILY RULES

The guiding principles for all daily rules are responsibility and respect for oneself, for

others, and for the surroundings. Consequences for breaking daily rules are less severe than major rules unless the offense is repeated so often as to indicate a more serious problem.

RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

- Students are expected to demonstrate courteous behavior. Proper chapel behavior is required. Quiet, reverent participation is expected. No distracting behavior or socializing is tolerated.
 - In assemblies, students are expected to come to order and give their attention to the speaker.
 - Students must behave properly for substitute teachers. Students reported for misconduct will serve at least one after school detention.
 - Public displays of affection (hugging, kissing, etc.) are not acceptable.
 - Punctuality is required. Once students earn five tardies in a given quarter for a class, they will receive nothing higher than a four on their quarter effort grade. This will preclude them from being on the semester honor roll.
 - During tutorial, students are required to work in a classroom, in the library, or in the computer lab. Tutorial is a time for students to seek extra help from teachers and for working on homework.
 - Bus misconduct will not be tolerated and may result in the loss of riding privileges.
 - Students may retrieve only their own possessions from the lost and found.
 - Students absent from classes during the school day may not participate in extra-curricular activities that day. This includes sports, activities, dances, etc.
 - Students absent for part of the day are responsible to meet with their teachers to turn in work that was due in the class that they missed and also collect assignments for the following day. Students missing part of the school day are not given extensions for the missed classes.
 - Students must remain quiet during roll call in emergency drills.
 - Chapels, assemblies, and advisory meetings are mandatory.
 - Students defacing lockers will lose their locker privilege.
- Students may not sell anything on campus.

LUNCH AND BREAK RULES

- Students are expected to follow all break and lunch rules.
- During lunch, sixth graders must eat on the cement bleachers, seventh graders must eat outside Highland Hall on the field side, and eighth graders on the portables side. Students may not eat inside the hall or hang out in the hallways during lunch.
- Students should walk safely to the hot lunch line.
- Games should be safe; no rough play will be tolerated. Pranks in which students are tripped are strictly forbidden.
- Students must always be in safe, supervised areas. It is not permitted to play in the parking lot, the church courtyard, the Lower School, the Upper School, or the gym without a teacher present.
- All students should be allowed to play in games. No one will be excluded.
- Students must pick up their own trash.
- Middle School students may go to the Upper School campus for classes only.
- When the field is wet, students should use the cement pathways. Students may not play on the field when it is wet.
- Because we have students with life-threatening food allergies we request that peanuts and peanut products are not brought to school.

MAINTAINING AN ORDERLY CAMPUS

- Students may not be in the gym or classrooms without a teacher present.
- The gym floor must be protected. No black-soled shoes are allowed on the courts.
- No food or drink is permitted.
- No bicycling, skateboarding, or rollerblading is allowed on campus, even during off hours.
- Collecting money on campus for any purpose other than approved fund-raisers is not allowed. Students may not sell anything on campus. Fundraisers must be approved by the Activities Director.
- No food or beverages are allowed inside the classrooms without faculty approval.
- Chewing gum on campus is not permitted.
- MP3 players, electronic games, lap tops, pagers, laser pointers and other such devices may not be brought onto campus. Cameras for special events are permitted with administrator approval. Unauthorized use of the equipment will result in its confiscation.
- Students are permitted to have cell phones on campus. The phones must stay off and may not be visible during the school day. Use of cell phones between 7:30-3:00 is only permitted in the Middle School Office or Dean's classroom. Students are permitted to use cell phones after 3:00 on other parts of the campus. Usage at this time should be restricted to communication with a parent. Students are never allowed to use any other function of the phone (camera, video, music, headphones, etc.) while on campus. Any student who abuses the cell phone privilege will lose their cell phone for one week. Multiple infractions will result in the loss of the privilege entirely.
- Students must respect the sanctity of one another's lockers, and are not permitted to switch locks or take items from another person's locker.

— H A N D B O O K —

CONSEQUENCES

Daily rule infractions are handled by the teaching assistants, faculty, and administration. The logical consequence could be the loss of privileges, writing assignments (an essay about the situation), parent conferences, and detentions.

Loss of Privileges

Students may lose break and lunch freedom of movement, participation in extracurricular events, free dress days, or any other privilege at the discretion of the teaching assistants, faculty, and administration.

Detention

Written or verbal notice of assigned detention is provided to the student. Failure to appear to assigned detention will result in two detentions being issued. Athletic events are not an excuse to miss detention. A record of detentions assigned to each student is maintained by the administration.

Suspension

Suspension constitutes an exclusion of a student from all curricular and extra curricular activities. The purpose of a suspension is to make the student and the parents aware that the student has seriously jeopardized his or her position at St. Margaret's. It provides an opportunity to reflect and gain perspective on the situation, and to decide whether the student is ready to renew their commitment to the philosophy and policies of the school.

When a student is suspended, his or her parents are notified and a conference is scheduled either before or after the suspension. Missed work or tests may be made-up with a two grade reduction (e.g. a score of a B would earn a D). If the situation warrants, an in-house suspension may be assigned.

Expulsion

St. Margaret's reserves the right to dismiss any student at any time during the school year if that student displays conduct or exhibits an attitude which is in opposition to the philosophy and policies of the school. Bringing dishonor to the school, even during a non-school event, may invoke this consequence.

If a student is dismissed, the principal will promptly notify the parents of the dismissal. A conference will be arranged as quickly as possible in order to discuss the pertinent facts and reasons for the dismissal.

A student most likely will be expelled from SMES for:

- Possessing drugs, weapons, or alcohol
- Stealing or destroying school or personal property
- A flagrant act of insubordination or disobedience
- Consistently inappropriate and disrespectful behavior toward teachers or fellow students.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Middle School Advisory Program

Middle School students are assigned an advisor who acts as a mentor for the student. Students meet periodically with their advisor to review their academic progress.

Through their advisory group, students are expected to participate in Community Service projects. These projects will take place during the school day. Any student unable to participate will be asked to make up the project. All make-up projects must be completed by the deadline established by Ms. Dunlop, the community service director.

Communicating with Your Child

During the school day, you may communicate with your child by calling the Middle School secretary at ext. 223. The secretary will ensure that the message is posted on the message board outside the office. Students are responsible for checking the board during the day. Students may use the student phone in the hall outside the Middle School office.

Although it is the responsibility of the student to bring classroom articles (books, homework, reports, etc.) to school, occasionally there is a need for parents to leave such items in the Middle School office for their child. Parents are asked not to go directly to the classroom.

Off-Campus Party Courtesies

- Although every family has a different approach to birthday parties and other celebrations, we ask that you consider the deliberately moderate approach we use with all of our Middle School dances and events. Students do not need extravagance in order to enjoy themselves. Early dating and inappropriate relationships can be curtailed with fun and age-appropriate activities at parties.
- We strongly discourage large, co-ed parties.
- Invitations to off campus parties may not be handed out on campus.

MIDDLE SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Boys Formal

White, oxford-cloth shirt; long, navy cotton or corduroy pants; navy pullover

sweater with logo; red school tie (from bookstore); neutral color belt; dark socks; dark polishable dress shoes (black tennis shoes are not acceptable). navy, black or grey belt.

Boys Informal

White knit shirt with the school crest; plain white turtlenecks in winter worn underneath shirts; navy shorts or pants; navy school sweatshirt; white crew socks; leather tie or loafer-style shoes; tennis shoes.

Girls Formal

White, uniform dress shirt ; blue pinfeather skirt in summer, red plaid in winter; navy pullover sweater with logo; plain white ankle socks, or plain white, black, navy knee socks, or crew socks; dark polishable dress shoes (black tennis shoes are not acceptable).

Girls Informal

White knit shirt with the school crest; plain white turtleneck in winter worn underneath either uniform shirt; leather tie or loafer-style shoes (no open heel); tennis shoes; white, black, red, or navy tights in winter.

Personal Grooming

Please help us maintain a reasonable and responsible student culture and school climate by not allowing your child to dye his/her hair unnatural colors. Boys need to maintain a conservative haircut - above the collar, out of the eyes and above the ears. Your child will be wearing our school uniform, with shirt tucked in, and representing the school through his/her appearance.