

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA**

**DARIN SMITH AND JULIA SMITH
ON BEHALF OF A.S.; DARIN SMITH;
JULIA SMITH**

Plaintiff,

v.

ST MARGARET MARY SCHOOL

Defendants

NO. _____

CIVIL ACTION - LAW

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

ELECTRONICALLY FILED

CIVIL COMPLAINT

AND NOW, comes PLAINTIFFS by and through his counsel, COX LAW GROUP and files the foregoing Civil Complaint:

1. Plaintiff A.S. is a minor child, therefore her parents Darin Smith and Julia Smith are bringing this lawsuit on her behalf.

2. Plaintiff Darin Smith and Julia Smith are also individual Plaintiff's in this matter.

3. Plaintiffs are individuals residing at 3812 Kramer Street; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17109.

4. Defendant is a school with its principal place of business at 826 Herr St, Harrisburg, PA 17103.

5. This Court has jurisdiction over this federal question matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 1331.

6. This Court has supplemental jurisdiction over the state related matters pursuant to 28 U.S.C. 1367 in that all of the facts and claims in this case arise from the same case, controversy, and transaction regarding the purchase of the property in question.

7. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391 because all of the conduct complained of occurred within this District.

8. On or about November 17, 2023, A.S. was in music class at St. Margaret Mary school with her music teacher Mr. Joseph Codispoti.

9. Mr. Joseph Codispoti is an employee and agent of Defendant.

10. On the day in question, A.S. had her hair stuck in a piece of Velcro.

11. Instead of this being brought to Plaintiff's Mr. Darin Smith Plaintiff Mrs. Julia Smith regarding how they wanted to handle the incident re: their daughter, Mr. Codispoti took it into his own hands by cutting the Velcro out of A.S.'s hair.

12. Defendant did not consult with or notify Plaintiffs before taking this action.

13. Defendant did not attempt to consult with or notify Plaintiffs before taking this action.

14. A.S. had 20 inches of her hair cut by Mr. Codispoti. *See* Photographs attached hereto as Exhibit A.

15. To further complicate the matters, Plaintiffs Mr. Darin Smith and Mrs. Julia Smith reached out to the school via email on November 17, 2023 and received no response.

16. Plaintiffs then reached out to the school via phone on November 20, 2023.

17. As related to the call on the 20th, there was no follow-up as promised by Defendant.

18. Defendant also made admissions that it did not follow-protocol in this matter.

19. Defendant has a Parent/Student Handbook that governs and sets forth policies for the school to follow in scenarios such as this one. *See* Parent/Student Handbook attached hereto as Exhibit B.

20. This incident violates pages 11, 16, 33, 28, and 36 of the Defendant's Parent/Student Handbook.

21. A.S. identifies as an African American girl.

22. A.S. is 8 years old of age.

23. A.S. had 23 inches of hair before this incident.

24. A.S.'s maintained long hair as a part of her African American heritage and culture.

25. A.S.'s hair is and was a part of her African American cultural identity

26. A.S. maintained long hair as a part of her family religious beliefs in correlation with allowing natural features an attributes provided by God to grow naturally.

27. Natural long hair is a large part of the African American culture.

28. Since this incident, A.S. has suffered from severe Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder ("PTSD') and other emotional Trauma that is directly from this incident.

29. A.S. is currently in therapy for the severe trauma associated with this incident and has been diagnosed PTSD. *See* Therapy Letter attached hereto as Exhibit C.

30. Plaintiffs Mr. Darin Smith and Julia Smith have also suffered severe emotional distress from this incident.

31. Plaintiffs Mr. Darin Smith and Julia Smith have also lost wages due to time taken away from work to take A.S. to therapy and medical appointments associated with this.

32. After the incident, Plaintiffs have requested the following accommodation: a request for an alternative to her having to attend music class with the music teacher who cut A.S.'s hair and a request to switch homerooms.

33. All of the accommodations requested were reasonable and supported by medical documentation. *See* Medical Support for accommodation attached hereto as Exhibit D.

34. Defendant did not honor any of the accommodation requests.

35. Defendant received federal aid through the National School Lunch Program and federal subsidies for internet access, the suit states.¹

36. Defendant receives federal aid through the National School lunch Program and federal subsidies for internet access, the suit states.

37. Defendant receives other federal aid.

38. Plaintiffs have exhausted all of their administrative remedies.

39. Plaintiffs have suffered damages including but not limiting to: monetary damages, medical expenses, emotional damages, attorneys' fees, etc.

COUNT I: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (race and national origin) v. Defendant

40. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

41. Plaintiff is a member of a protected class on the basis of her African American race.

¹ <https://www.pennlive.com/news/2020/03/catholic-school-blatantly-violated-students-rights-by-expelling-instead-of-helping-her-parents-claim-in-lawsuit.html>

42. Plaintiff is a member of a protected class on the basis of her national origin.

43. Defendant's actions were taken with a willful and wanton disregard of Plaintiff's rights under Title VII and on the basis of her race and national origin.

44. As a direct and proximate result of said unlawful practices and in disregard of Plaintiff's rights and sensibilities, Plaintiff has suffered humiliation, degradation, emotional distress, other consequential damages.

COUNT II: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (religion) v. Defendant

45. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

46. Plaintiff is a member of a protected class on the basis of her religion.

47. Defendant's actions were taken with a willful and wanton disregard of Plaintiff's rights under Title VII and on the basis of her religion.

48. As a direct and proximate result of said unlawful practices and in disregard of Plaintiff's rights and sensibilities, Plaintiff has suffered humiliation, degradation, emotional distress, other consequential damages.

COUNT III: American Disabilities Act v. Defendant

49. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

50. Plaintiff has suffered severe emotional distress from this.

51. Plaintiff has been medically diagnosed with emotional issues from this.

52. Plaintiff requested multiple accommodations from Defendant that were recommended medically due to her emotional distress and PTSD.

53. All of the accommodation requests were reasonable.

54. Defendant denied the accommodation requests.

COUNT IV: Breach of Contract/Breach of Parent/Student Handbook

55. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

56. Defendant and Plaintiff have a binding parent handbook that governs the relationship between the parties.

57. Pages 11, 16, 33, 28, and 36 of the handbook set policies and warrant that Defendant will check with parents before making decisions such as the one leading to the incident in question.

58. This incident violates pages 11, 16, 33, 28, and 36 of the Defendant's Parent/Student Handbook.

COUNT V: Battery

59. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs as if set forth fully herein.

60. Defendant's touching of Plaintiff to cut her hair was intentional.

61. Defendant's touching of Plaintiff to cut her hair was harmful and offensive.

62. Plaintiff did not give consent to cut her hair.

**COUNT VI, VI, VIII: Intentional Infliction of Emotional Distress v.
Defendant**

63. Defendant's act of cutting Plaintiff's hair was intentional or reckless at minimum.

64. Defendant's act was extreme and outrageous.

65. Defendant's conduct caused severe emotional distress for all Plaintiff's.

COX LAW GROUP

By:



Date: January 25, 2023

Anthony D. Cox Jr., Esquire
Attorney I.D. No. 324175
2468 Magnolia Terrace
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17110

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

AND NOW, this 26th day of January, 2024, I, Anthony D. Cox, Jr., Esquire, hereby certify that I did file the foregoing **and** a true and correct copy is available for viewing by the following counsel of record:

Terrence J. Kerwin, Esquire
Counsel for Defendant
Kerwin & Kerwin, LLP
4245 State Route 209
Elizabethville, PA 17023

2601 North Front Street, Suite 101
Harrisburg, PA 17110

CIVIL COVER SHEET

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. (SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON NEXT PAGE OF THIS FORM.)

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS
Darin Smith and Julia Smith On Behalf of A.S.; Darin Smith; Julia Smith
(b) County of Residence of First Listed Plaintiff
(c) Attorneys (Firm Name, Address, and Telephone Number)

DEFENDANTS
St. Margaret Mary School
County of Residence of First Listed Defendant
NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE TRACT OF LAND INVOLVED.
Attorneys (If Known)

II. BASIS OF JURISDICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)
1 U.S. Government Plaintiff
2 U.S. Government Defendant
3 Federal Question (U.S. Government Not a Party)
4 Diversity (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)

III. CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPAL PARTIES (Place an "X" in One Box for Plaintiff and One Box for Defendant)
PTF DEF
Citizen of This State
Citizen of Another State
Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country
Incorporated or Principal Place of Business In This State
Incorporated and Principal Place of Business In Another State
Foreign Nation

IV. NATURE OF SUIT (Place an "X" in One Box Only) Click here for: Nature of Suit Code Descriptions.

Table with columns: CONTRACT, REAL PROPERTY, TORTS, CIVIL RIGHTS, PRISONER PETITIONS, FORFEITURE/PENALTY, LABOR, IMMIGRATION, BANKRUPTCY, SOCIAL SECURITY, FEDERAL TAX SUITS, OTHER STATUTES. Includes codes for various legal categories like Personal Injury, Real Property, Labor, etc.

V. ORIGIN (Place an "X" in One Box Only)
1 Original Proceeding
2 Removed from State Court
3 Remanded from Appellate Court
4 Reinstated or Reopened
5 Transferred from Another District (specify)
6 Multidistrict Litigation - Transfer
8 Multidistrict Litigation - Direct File

VI. CAUSE OF ACTION
Cite the U.S. Civil Statute under which you are filing (Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity):
Title VI
Brief description of cause:
Title VI, ADA, Tort

VII. REQUESTED IN COMPLAINT:
CHECK IF THIS IS A CLASS ACTION UNDER RULE 23, F.R.Cv.P.
DEMAND \$
CHECK YES only if demanded in complaint:
JURY DEMAND: Yes No

VIII. RELATED CASE(S) IF ANY
(See instructions):
JUDGE
DOCKET NUMBER

DATE: January 26, 2024
SIGNATURE OF ATTORNEY OF RECORD: /s/ Anthony D. Cox, Jr., Esq.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
RECEIPT # AMOUNT APPLYING IFP JUDGE MAG. JUDGE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ATTORNEYS COMPLETING CIVIL COVER SHEET FORM JS 44

Authority For Civil Cover Sheet

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replaces nor supplements the filings and service of pleading or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating the civil docket sheet. Consequently, a civil cover sheet is submitted to the Clerk of Court for each civil complaint filed. The attorney filing a case should complete the form as follows:

- I.(a) Plaintiffs-Defendants.** Enter names (last, first, middle initial) of plaintiff and defendant. If the plaintiff or defendant is a government agency, use only the full name or standard abbreviations. If the plaintiff or defendant is an official within a government agency, identify first the agency and then the official, giving both name and title.
- (b) County of Residence.** For each civil case filed, except U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county where the first listed plaintiff resides at the time of filing. In U.S. plaintiff cases, enter the name of the county in which the first listed defendant resides at the time of filing. (NOTE: In land condemnation cases, the county of residence of the "defendant" is the location of the tract of land involved.)
- (c) Attorneys.** Enter the firm name, address, telephone number, and attorney of record. If there are several attorneys, list them on an attachment, noting in this section "(see attachment)".
- II. Jurisdiction.** The basis of jurisdiction is set forth under Rule 8(a), F.R.Cv.P., which requires that jurisdictions be shown in pleadings. Place an "X" in one of the boxes. If there is more than one basis of jurisdiction, precedence is given in the order shown below.
 United States plaintiff. (1) Jurisdiction based on 28 U.S.C. 1345 and 1348. Suits by agencies and officers of the United States are included here. United States defendant. (2) When the plaintiff is suing the United States, its officers or agencies, place an "X" in this box.
 Federal question. (3) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1331, where jurisdiction arises under the Constitution of the United States, an amendment to the Constitution, an act of Congress or a treaty of the United States. In cases where the U.S. is a party, the U.S. plaintiff or defendant code takes precedence, and box 1 or 2 should be marked.
 Diversity of citizenship. (4) This refers to suits under 28 U.S.C. 1332, where parties are citizens of different states. When Box 4 is checked, the citizenship of the different parties must be checked. (See Section III below; **NOTE: federal question actions take precedence over diversity cases.**)
- III. Residence (citizenship) of Principal Parties.** This section of the JS 44 is to be completed if diversity of citizenship was indicated above. Mark this section for each principal party.
- IV. Nature of Suit.** Place an "X" in the appropriate box. If there are multiple nature of suit codes associated with the case, pick the nature of suit code that is most applicable. Click here for: [Nature of Suit Code Descriptions](#).
- V. Origin.** Place an "X" in one of the seven boxes.
 Original Proceedings. (1) Cases which originate in the United States district courts.
 Removed from State Court. (2) Proceedings initiated in state courts may be removed to the district courts under Title 28 U.S.C., Section 1441.
 Remanded from Appellate Court. (3) Check this box for cases remanded to the district court for further action. Use the date of remand as the filing date.
 Reinstated or Reopened. (4) Check this box for cases reinstated or reopened in the district court. Use the reopening date as the filing date.
 Transferred from Another District. (5) For cases transferred under Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1404(a). Do not use this for within district transfers or multidistrict litigation transfers.
 Multidistrict Litigation – Transfer. (6) Check this box when a multidistrict case is transferred into the district under authority of Title 28 U.S.C. Section 1407.
 Multidistrict Litigation – Direct File. (8) Check this box when a multidistrict case is filed in the same district as the Master MDL docket.
PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS NOT AN ORIGIN CODE 7. Origin Code 7 was used for historical records and is no longer relevant due to changes in statute.
- VI. Cause of Action.** Report the civil statute directly related to the cause of action and give a brief description of the cause. **Do not cite jurisdictional statutes unless diversity.** Example: U.S. Civil Statute: 47 USC 553 Brief Description: Unauthorized reception of cable service.
- VII. Requested in Complaint.** Class Action. Place an "X" in this box if you are filing a class action under Rule 23, F.R.Cv.P.
 Demand. In this space enter the actual dollar amount being demanded or indicate other demand, such as a preliminary injunction.
 Jury Demand. Check the appropriate box to indicate whether or not a jury is being demanded.
- VIII. Related Cases.** This section of the JS 44 is used to reference related pending cases, if any. If there are related pending cases, insert the docket numbers and the corresponding judge names for such cases.

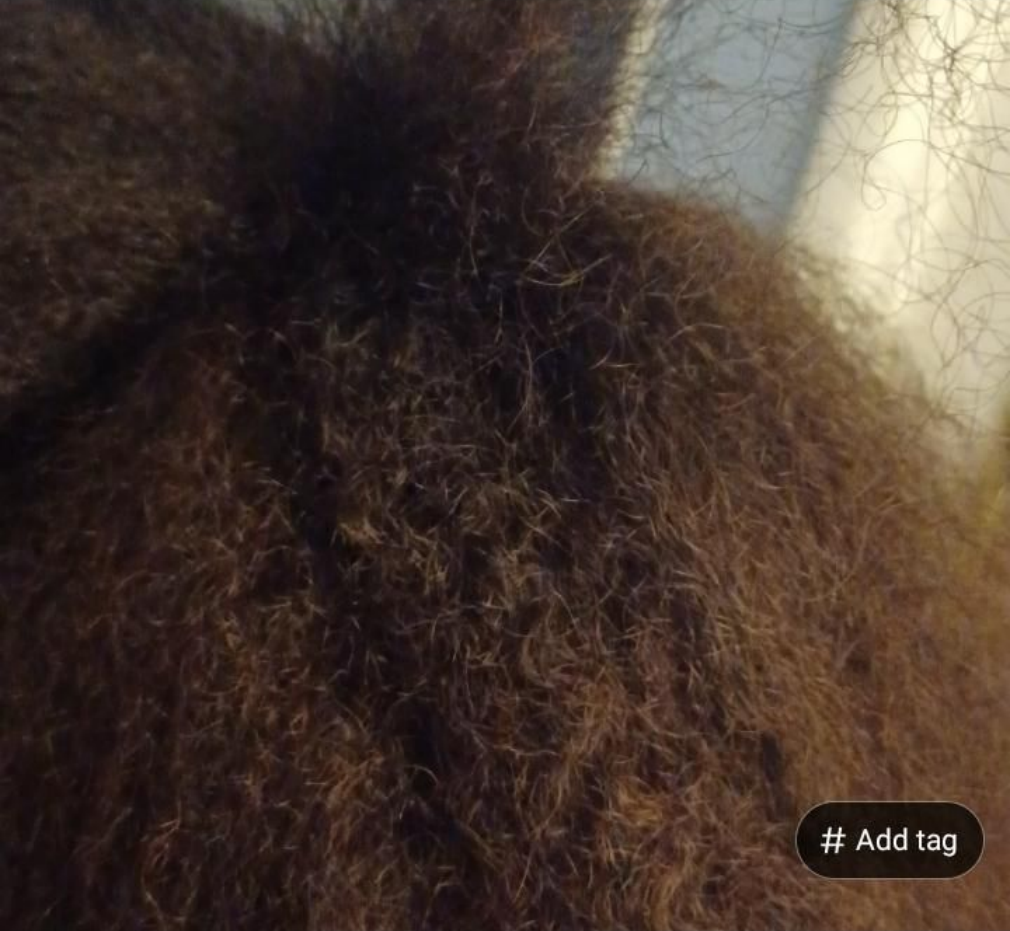
Date and Attorney Signature. Date and sign the civil cover sheet.











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STUDENT/PARENT HANDBOOK

Saint Margaret Mary School

2826 Herr Street

Harrisburg, PA

Phone – 717-232-3771

Fax – 717-232-0776

Website – www.stmmparishschool.org

*Let it be known to all who enter here
that Christ is the reason for this school,
the unseen, but ever-present, Teacher in its classes,
the Model of its faculty,
the Inspiration of its students.*

Revised 8/2022

FOREWORD

This handbook has been designed to describe to you the philosophy, curriculum, and procedures of the school. It is believed that you can contribute much to the success of the school program if you understand what the school is trying to do. The education and training of children must remain the joint responsibility and cooperative program of the home and school.

Nothing contained in this handbook is intended to, or shall be construed to, create any contractual obligations, expressed or implied, on the part of the diocese, or school.

It is hoped that you will read the handbook, acquaint yourself thoroughly with its contents, keep it in a safe place, and consult it for the assistance it is designed to give.

RIGHT TO AMEND

The School Administration, in consultation with the Pastor and the Board of Education of Saint Margaret Mary School, reserves the right to amend this handbook when circumstances warrant it. Parents and students will be promptly notified, in writing, of any such amendment.

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SAINT MARGARET MARY SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Saint Margaret Mary School provides the best possible Catholic education in a faith-filled, safe, and happy environment while fostering a love for God, self, and others. The administration, faculty, and staff encourage peacemaking, self-discipline and learning through a variety of experiences that will lead to well-rounded individuals who will become future leaders in our church and responsible citizens in the world.

Core Values and Beliefs of Saint Margaret Mary School

We believe...

- St. Margaret Mary School is a family oriented school guided by caring qualified teachers.
- We must provide an excellent religious and academic education in a Catholic environment.
- We must help each child grow in faith, knowledge, and sense of service to the community within and outside the school.
- Self-esteem, self-discipline, a spirit of cooperation, and a desire to learn are values which we must encourage and incorporate into our curriculum and foster in our multicultural school community.
- Teachers are partners with our parents, who are the primary educators of their children, and we are entrusted to provide a successful and faith-filled learning experience.
- Evangelization is part of the school's mission to Catholic students, their families, and the sharing of the Christian message with students and families, our parishes, and our families of other faith traditions.

HISTORY OF SAINT MARGARET MARY SCHOOL

Saint Margaret Mary School has a solid tradition of bringing Catholic education to the Harrisburg area community. St Margaret Mary Parish was established in March 1948 with Father Francis A. Kirchner serving as the first pastor. In October 1949 the school and church (which occupied the current gymnasium) were dedicated. The School Sisters of Notre Dame taught in the school. In 1955, the St. Margaret Mary Convent was built.

With the growing Catholic community, an additional four classrooms were built in 1958. In 1985, the Sisters of Notre Dame withdrew and Dr. Kathleen McKenna became the first lay principal. In July 1986, with the closing of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament School, the students from the parishes of both Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament and St. Matthew the Apostle, Dauphin enrolled in St. Margaret Mary School. At the same time, two Sisters of Mercy began teaching in the school. Due to the growing enrollment, a modular classroom building was added in July 1987.

As a service to working parents, the A-STEP program, which provides after school care for school children, began in 1997. In the summer of 1999, extensive renovation was completed on the school

building. Tragically, in February 2000, a fire destroyed the modular classrooms in the back of the school. With insurance funds and the overwhelming support of the community, a new annex consisting of six modular classrooms was attached to the main building in August 2000.

A Pre-Kindergarten Program began in September 2007, in the former Sacred Heart Room of the convent building. In the same year, a Before-School Program, known as B-STEP, began.

Currently, all classrooms are equipped with Hitachi Starboards for instructional and interactive learning. Students have access to i-Pads and Surface Pro devices.

Today the school offers a full curriculum that meets state and diocesan standards, taught by a certified faculty with numerous extracurricular opportunities for students to learn and grow.

SCHOOL BOARD

The School Board is a consultative body consisting of elected and appointed members, whose purpose is to advise and assist the pastor and principal with the governance of the school, especially school policy. The Board is composed of representative members from St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Parish and feeder parishes. In contrast to public school boards, parochial school boards of education are consultative in nature and are not tasked with administrative responsibilities or duties appropriate to the principal and faculty.

PARENTS AS EDUCATORS

First and foremost, parents have a serious obligation of providing and monitoring the progress of the education of their children. Parents are the first educators and must create a family atmosphere filled with love and respect for God and His people. By teaching their children values, attitudes, and a love of Christ, self and others, parents foster a well-rounded personal and social education.

The Catholic school is an extension of the education that begins in the home. By the time children enter school, they are not beginning their education, but they are continuing their education with the help of the adult community i.e. parents and trained educators. A positive attitude toward education by both parents and students is very important to achieve success. The parental attitude towards education is the most influential factor of the students academic achievement.

When concerns between teachers and students arise, parental judgments should be reserved until a conference with the teacher can be arranged. This must be the first step before contacting the administration. In cases requiring disciplinary action of a student, the full cooperation of the parents will be most helpful in resolving the situation. A disregard of authority allowed to continue at this level of education may carry into adulthood.

FACULTY AND STAFF

The faculty consists of state certified teachers who are dedicated to providing students with a quality Catholic education in accordance with the Office of Catholic Education, Diocese of Harrisburg and Pennsylvania state regulations. Teachers are certified in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and many have Masters Degrees. Adult aides assist in the preschool and kindergarten classes.

Policies and Procedures

ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

It is essential to teach our students that education is a priority in their lives. Through regular school attendance, students learn personal responsibility with emphasis on the importance of education as a lifelong foundation.

In accordance with the school law of Pennsylvania, The Diocese of Harrisburg has the following requirements regarding attendance:

- Regular attendance is expected of all students
- All absences are considered illegal or unexcused except the following:
 - Illness of the student
 - Death in the family
 - Exceptionally urgent reason that affects the child
 - An educational family excursion that has been approved by the principal (see school website for

Parents are required to notify the school office before 8:30 A.M. on the day of a child's absence. If the school office is not notified before this time, parents will be contacted concerning the student's absence. On the first day that a student returns to school after an absence, the student is required to present to his/her teacher an absentee note properly completed and signed by a parent.

- **It is mandatory under Pennsylvania State law to send a note reporting an absence. Please include the child's name, teacher/grade, date of absence and specific reason for the absence.**
- **Without a note the student's record will show the absence as unexcused.**
- A parent should email a teacher directly to request class and homework assignments when a student is absent for more than two days. Assignments will be available for pick up at the school office or sent home with a sibling. *Students will receive one day per absence to complete missed assignments. (Two days absent equals two days to complete and hand in assignments.)*
- Extensive absences:
 - 10 or more absences - the parent/guardian will be required to attend a meeting with the Student Support Team and administration.
 - Will be reported to the child's home school district for truancy. A fine may be assessed to the family.
 - Must be reported to the Diocese Department of Education and Children and Youth Services.
- *For more information regarding attendance policies, please consult the Attendance Policy located on stmmparishschool.org under E-Files. (<http://stmmparishschool.org/upld/eFiles/StMMAttendancePolicy2019.pdf>)*

Procedures for Tardy and Absence:

- Students who arrive at school after 8:00 a.m. but before 10:00 a.m. will be considered tardy.

- Students who arrive after 10:00 a.m. will be considered absent for half a day.
- A parent/ guardian must accompany late students to the office.

Diocesan policy states that 5 tardies for non-medical reasons will be changed to 1 day absent. A medical excuse from a doctor is required for three or more consecutive days of absence.

Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in a meeting with the school counselor and principal to create a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP).

Procedures for Leaving During the School Day:

A student who leaves school before 10:00 a.m. due to illness or an appointment, and does not return to school is considered absent for the entire day.

- Early dismissals will be monitored for frequency.
- Five (5) early dismissals may be changed to one (1) day absent.

No student is permitted to leave the school after arrival in the morning or at any time during the day before the regular dismissal except in case of a doctor's appointment, sickness, or similar emergency. In such cases, the student is permitted to wait in the hallway outside of the front office. No student will be permitted to wait outside the building or leave with an individual other than the one who has been designated through a note or phone call by the parent. **Parents are encouraged to make doctor and dental appointments after 3 p.m. to avoid interruption of the school day.**

A student will not be dismissed early for reasons other than sickness unless the homeroom teacher and the school office receive a written statement from the parent explaining the reasons (e.g., doctor's appt.) for the early dismissal request. Upon arrival at the school, the parent must check in at the office to have the student signed out.

- **If a student is going to be absent from school for more than two days for a non-medical reason, the education trip form, which can be found on our website, must be submitted to the principal for approval at least 5 days prior to the absence.**
 - Non-medical reasons include but are not limited to: non-school athletic competitions, Take Your Child to Work Day, and vacations.
 - Parents are requested not to plan vacations during the school term, as this is disruptive to both the class and the student.
 - Any student who is out of school will be marked absent and is responsible to make up any work that is missed.
- Students who participate in or attend extra-curricular or school sponsored activities must be present in school for the full day in order to participate. This includes illness or scheduled appointments that result in a full day of absence. Parents are expected to abide by this requirement.
- Schoolwork that is missed must be made up upon return to school or the student may choose to call a fellow classmate for homework assignments.
- Only after **two** days of absence, parents may request missed assignments to be picked up at the office. Please contact the office before 10:00 a.m. Assignments may be picked up in the school office from 2:45- 3:15 p.m.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

The Office for Catholic Education of the Diocese of Harrisburg sets the guidelines for all curricula in the school. The total development of a student depends not only on their ability to learn as well as they can through a diversified curriculum.

The curriculum objectives:

Religion

- To provide the essentials of Catholic doctrine and the principles of morality
- To teach the Catholic Liturgy with the Mass as its center
- To familiarize the student with the Scriptures
- To expose the students to the historical development of the Church
- To teach truths that illuminate our understanding of life
- To teach reverence for God and for all creatures
- To prepare students for first reception of the Sacraments

Service to Others:

Part of the religion curriculum for grades 7 & 8 is to provide service to others. A minimum of 30 hours is required in both 7th and 8th grades. Ten service hours are required to be submitted to the religion teachers by the last day of trimesters 1 & 2. The service hours for the 3rd trimester are due no later than a date determined by the teacher. Service hours may be turned in early and will be credited to the appropriate trimester. Failing to complete required service hours each trimester will have a negative impact on a student's religion grade as well as a negative impact on their ability to participate in special end of the year activities such as school dances, special assemblies, Track & Field Day, and the class field trip.

Human Sexuality/Formation in Christian Chastity

The Diocese of Harrisburg has approved guidelines for programs in Human Sexuality and Formation in Christian Chastity. Saint Margaret Mary School integrates both programs into the religion curriculum. Students in grades one through eight are guided in identifying life as a gift from God. The emphasis is upon an awareness and simple appreciation of creation in all forms: plants, animals, family, and self. In addition, students are encouraged to become more aware of their personal attitudes toward life, their dignity as persons, along with their normal physical and emotional development. They explore the wonders of life through sound theological materials and under the watchful eye of parents, church, and faculty. In short, students are presented with the idea that "what they are is God's gift to them and what they become is their gift to God."

Language Arts

- To develop and practice correct grammar
- To improve oral and written communication skills
- To teach writing in accordance with acceptable English usage
- To master logical organization of ideas in both written and spoken forms
- To develop reading and comprehension skills
- To acquaint students with literary classics

Mathematics

- To develop mathematical and application skills

- To teach quantitative concepts
- To teach mathematical computations
- To teach concepts and operations in practical applications
- To develop the ability to prove geometrical relationships and to use units of measurements
- To encourage sound reasoning and logical thinking
- To emphasize problem solving
- To involve the students in math competitions and math-a-thons

Science

- To utilize a hands-on approach in teaching science
- To develop for each student a working knowledge of terminology, laws, theories, methods of investigation, and scientific process skills
- To expose students to laboratory experiences and techniques
- To have students participate in science fairs
- To teach scientific achievement in historical context

Social Studies

- To present the different geological areas of the world
- To emphasize cultures, industries, and natural resources
- To chronologically trace the development of civilization throughout the world
- To familiarize the student with the United States Constitution, the American political process, and the structure of the American government
- To expose the student to current events that affect the world today and evaluate them in relation to past events that constitute our American heritage
- To have students participate in National History Day

Music

- To develop music appreciation through theory and singing
- To teach liturgical music
- To offer optional instrumental music lessons and a band experience

Art

- To expose students to various art forms and styles
- To familiarize the students with many artists and to help them appreciate the beauty in all forms of art and history
- To allow for creativity in the student's own expression of art
- To involve the students in art competitions

Physical Education/Health

- To teach the student basic calisthenics and physical fitness
- To teach the student the basics in hygiene, proper nutrition, and dangers of drugs and alcohol

Spanish

- To expose students to the language and culture of Spanish speaking countries
- To learn basic grammar, conversation, idioms and vocabulary of the Spanish language

Technology

- To teach basic computer terminology
- To teach students to collect, graph and analyze data
- To have students explore a variety of simulations and applications
- To reinforce basic computer literacy to include keyboarding and word processing
- To instruct students on Internet safety and proper Internet behavior
- To participate in distance learning via the Wide Area Network

Science, Technology, Religion, Engineering, Arts, & Math (STREAM) lessons are incorporated in all subject areas.

Educational Services

Through the use of state funds, the school shares in certain special services provided for all non-public schools under PA Act 89. Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) provides:

- Speech and Language Therapy
- Educational/Psychological Evaluation
- Remedial Math/Reading
- Guidance Services

Remedial Reading and Mathematics

Remedial reading and math instruction is available on a part-time basis to students who are in need of individualized help. The classroom teacher and the remedial teacher in conjunction with the parent make this determination. This service is provided through the Capital Area Intermediate Unit. The program allows for carefully planned and executed activities geared to individual needs, and individual evaluations to determine level of ability and measured progress.

Instructional Support

St. Margaret Mary School recognized that every student has a unique gift from God. In an effort to support students who demonstrate through classroom performance that assistance in the learning process may be required, a team of teachers, support staff and administrators meet to review and address the needs of each student who is referred by his/her teacher. Academic, social, emotional and behavioral needs are addressed and action plans developed in conjunction with parents.

St. Margaret Mary School employs certified teachers who are part of the St. Margaret Mary School Instructional Support Team. When appropriate and available, the support team will provide services to students who qualify. They work with students identified with an academic learning disability and/or enrichment needs.

ACCIDENTS

In minor cases, authorized school personnel will give first aid. In the event of an emergency requiring professional medical assistance, every effort will be made to contact the parents. If a parent is not available, an authorized local contact person on their emergency contact list in Rediker will be called. If none of the authorized persons listed can be reached, the school will seek the care needed. Parents will be responsible for any expenses incurred. The diocese offers a supplemental student insurance policy for families to purchase. If an emergency exists, the student will be taken to the nearest hospital by ambulance or by car, and efforts to contact a parent will continue. **For this reason, it is important that**

parents/guardians update their emergency information as needed through the [Parent Portal in Rediker](#).

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

All students will participate in Star Renaissance online standardized testing for reading and math, which measures achievement and ability. These tests will be administered at school three times per year during the fall, winter, spring, and can be administered by the teacher for further progress monitoring. Reports are sent home after each assessment.

ADDRESS CHANGE

All changes of address, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, and emergency contact information can be completed by a parent/guardian through the Student Information Form that is digitally distributed at the beginning of each academic school year. Additional changes throughout the school year should be made via the [Parent Portal in Rediker](#). Changes are to be reported promptly to the office, to the homeroom teacher, and to the nurse as well. Be certain that the school has a second telephone number to be used when a contact number cannot be reached with the home/cell number.

ADMISSION

Families of Saint Margaret Mary and our feeder parishes including Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament and St. Matthew Parishes who desire an educational experience founded on the Catholic philosophy of education are given the privilege to have equal eligibility for admission to Saint Margaret Mary School. The request for admission of students from all three parishes will be carefully reviewed as to the family's parish registration, coupled with their commitment in church attendance and faithful parish support. The Catholic rate is reserved for those who have been baptized practicing Catholics and are actively supporting a Catholic parish.

After accommodating the families of the three parishes, Saint Margaret Mary School may provide space for other families to include children of other parishes, and children not of the Catholic faith.

All new admissions in grades 1-8 are on a provisional basis. Students' academics and behavior are monitored throughout the first trimester of school. Support is given to help all new students to find success at St. Margaret Mary School. Students who do not succeed academically or are unable to conform to our discipline policies will be asked to find another academic setting that would be more suited to meet their needs.

All transfer students are accepted on a trial basis, and admission is reviewed after the first trimester.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Regarding the admission of students, Saint Margaret Mary School will not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, or religion. Enrollment shall not exceed 25 students in any class except when approved by the principal and the pastor. For admission to grade one, a child shall be six years of age before September 1 of the school year in question. Students whose birth date falls on or after September 1 of that school year or not eligible for grade 1.

Children who reach the age of five before September 1 of the school year in question may be admitted to kindergarten. Students whose birth date falls on or after September 1 of that school year are

not eligible for kindergarten. Screening is done for incoming Kindergarten children during the month of May. This screening evaluates the child's vision, hearing, physical development, ability to listen and follow directions, and fine motor skills. The following must be presented upon registration:

- Birth Certificate
- Baptismal Certificate
- Verification of Immunization as required by the Commonwealth of PA
- Proof of custody where applicable
- Health Survey
- Academic records from previous school (transfer students), including:
 - Copy of most current IEP
 - 504 Plan
 - Learning Plans
 - IU Early Intervention Programs
- Parishioner Verification Form
- Student Discipline Records

ANTI-HAZING POLICY

The Diocese of Harrisburg prohibits any form of hazing of or by employees, volunteers or students. Hazing is defined as: "Any action or situation which recklessly or intentionally endangers the mental or physical health or safety of a person or which willfully destroys or removes public or private property for the purpose of initiation or admission into or affiliation with, or as a condition for continued membership in, any organization. The term shall include, but not be limited to, any brutality of a physical nature, such as whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the elements, forced consumption of any food, liquor, drug or other substance, or any other forced physical activity which could adversely affect the physical health and safety of the individual, and shall include any activity which would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as sleep deprivation, forced exclusion from social contact, forced conduct which could result in extreme embarrassment, or any other forced activity which could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual, or any willful destruction or removal of public or private property.

For purposes of this definition, any activity as described in this definition upon which the initiation or admission into or affiliation with or continued membership in an organization is directly or indirectly conditioned shall be presumed to be "forced" activity, the willingness of an individual to participate in such activity notwithstanding." (From Act 2016-31) Any student who experiences some form of hazing or staff member who becomes aware of hazing should report it to the school administration. Any staff member or volunteer coach who permits or encourages hazing will face disciplinary action, including possible dismissal. Any student who engages in hazing is subject to discipline, up to and including expulsion, depending on the seriousness of the offensive conduct. Every elementary and secondary school shall promulgate this policy to parents and provide a copy to all athletic coaches and moderators of activities in accord with Pennsylvania state law.

Policy Adopted: July 1, 2016, RWG/Bishop of Harrisburg

ALTAR SERVERS

Boys and girls entering the fifth grade who have a desire to minister to the people of St. Margaret Mary Parish and school are invited to become altar servers. Information on this program is available through

the St. Margaret Mary Parish office. Students who have been trained as altar servers in their home parishes are invited to serve at school Masses.

ANNUAL FUNDRAISERS

In order for St. Margaret Mary School to maintain a reasonable tuition rate a variety of fundraisers take place during the year. **The PTO and the school administration depend upon the support of all families for the fundraisers to be successful. Your participation is crucial and greatly appreciated by the students, teachers, and staff.** Each student benefits from these endeavors; therefore, it is required that each parent fully participate and support them.

Following are the ongoing fundraisers for each school year:

Boxtops for Education: General Mills will donate ten cents for every boxtop redeemed. Box tops are redeemed digitally by scanning your grocery receipts.

Coke Rewards: Go to the website Coke.com/give to get started with Coca-Cola Give. You'll donate by signing in and choosing your local school. Note, schools are not authorized to have individual accounts so all donations must originate from individual Coke.com accounts. Any donation that a school receives from the program can be used to purchase supplies for extra-curricular activities including sports, technology, art and/or school supplies within your school. For more information regarding Coke Rewards, [click link](#).

Inkjet Cartridges: St. Margaret Mary School collects and recycles used home printer ink cartridges only. The school earns points through Funding Factory, which are redeemable for cash rebates.

Online Auction: St. Margaret Mary families are invited to bid on auction items on E-Bay. Items include fun faculty events with students, student artwork, Principal for a Day, sports memorabilia and event tickets and a variety of gift baskets.

PTO Fundraisers: Sub sales are held several times per school year. Butter Braid sales are held in the spring. As with sub sales, orders are placed, filled and sent home with the students.

STMMS Dance Fit: Dance-a-thon where students ask family and friends to sponsor them as they dance during part of the school day for one week during the school year.

SCRIP: This program is a crucial fund-raising program for our school. Scholarship funds are generated through the sale of gift cards. A variety of gift cards may be purchased in the Divine Mercy Room after weekend Masses at St. Margaret Mary Church or online at shopwithscrip.com. Think of it as "one-stop-shopping." No more running around for gifts, etc. You can get all your gift cards through this program. Order over the weekend or on Monday and receive by Friday!

Shoparoo: Hassle-free fundraising phone app. Shop for products at any store. Snap a picture of your receipt. Shoparoo then donates to our school. It's that easy!

Spartan Sprint: A major fundraiser for St. Margaret Mary School. Families submit twelve or more address labels for sponsorship for students. Students participate in a run/walk to raise funds for St. Margaret Mary School.

St. Margaret Mary 5K: Participants run/walk a challenging course through our St. Margaret Mary community. T-shirts are included with registration, if completed by deadline. Prizes are awarded in each age category.

Weis 4 Schools: Register at weis4schools.com by scanning the code found on our website. You only need to register once. When you shop, our school will receive a percentage of your purchase.

ASSEMBLIES

Assembly programs are held periodically throughout the school year. Advance notification of assemblies, listing dates, and times will be distributed to students and is also available through the school website.

A-STEP/B-STEP

The Saint Margaret Mary School A-STEP (After School Tutorial and Enrichment Program) is designed to develop the social, intellectual, emotional, and physical dimensions of the children entrusted to its care. Certified teachers of St. Margaret Mary School staff both the A-STEP and B-STEP (Before School Tutorial and Enrichment Program). A-STEP provides its own handbook and fee schedule. For more information on the before and after school programs, please call the school office or school website.

For more information on our A-STEP program, please visit our website.

For more information on our B-STEP program, please visit our website.

ATTENDANCE

The students should be in school by 7:55 a.m., but not before 7:30 a.m.. When a student arrives for school after 8:00 AM, he/she is marked tardy. If the student is tardy, he/she is required to report to the school office for a late slip before entering the classroom. A parent or guardian must accompany the student to the office. Excessive lateness is detrimental to a child's learning, and, consequently, a parent conference will take place when a pattern of lateness occurs. See Absence section.

BIRTHDAY TREATS

Parents may send in a small birthday treat to celebrate your child's birthday. This treat should be an individual serving size for each student in the homeroom. **Full-sized cakes are not permitted.** The individual treats will be shared at morning recess or at lunch. Please send treats with students or drop them off at the office. Parents will not be permitted to drop treats off in the child's classroom. Please check with the homeroom teacher to see if there are any allergy concerns in the class.

BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

The Diocese of Harrisburg and Saint School Margaret Mary School affirm the inherent value of every individual and upholds the respect due to each because of his or her uniqueness as a child of God; therefore, the Diocese and Saint Margaret Mary School are committed to providing for its students an educational environment that is free from physical, psychological, sexual or verbal harassment.

The Diocese and Saint Margaret Mary School prohibits any form of harassment of or by employers, employees, students, parents/guardians and/or volunteers. This includes bullying or cyberbullying of or by students, on or off the school campus. Harassment shall be defined as any sort of unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that has the intent or effect of the following:

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student
- Damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
- Placing a student in reasonable fear or physical, emotional or mental harm;

- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property;
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses to technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher or employee of the school by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs and social networking sites). All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and offenders shall be subject to appropriate discipline as noted in this policy. Please refer to the diocesan policy located in the Parent and Student Handbook as well as on the diocesan website.

Any student or adult who experiences any form of harassment should immediately report it to their teacher and the school administration. Prompt investigation of allegations of harassment will be made on a confidential basis by the most immediate administrative authority not involved with the allegation to ascertain the veracity of complaints.

A report of harassment, bullying and/or cyberbullying will not, in and of itself, imply that any wrongdoing as defined in this policy has occurred. However, a substantiated act of these will result in disciplinary action. Disciplinary action will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The school will use all available resources including: student-teacher discussions, parent-teacher discussions, principal involvement, counselor involvement, loss of privileges, detention, suspension and expulsion. Depending on the seriousness of the act, expulsion from the school and/or referral to appropriate law enforcement agencies may be warranted.

St. Margaret Mary School has an anti-bullying policy that is based on our Catholic faith. In the Gospel of Saint Matthew, Jesus tells us “So in everything, do to others what you would have them /do to you.” We continually work with our students to help them gain a complete understanding of this area of faith and to practice living this rule in all aspects of their lives. Because they are a work in progress, we feel that this is a necessary tool to help students who bully others in this area of their faith.

Bullying, as defined in our school community, is when someone is repeatedly being hurt on purpose either physically, verbally, by written words, including by electronic correspondence, or by exclusion of a group or individual student.

Second Step (Social & Emotional Educational Program) is taught by the teachers as part of our anti-bullying program. Our anti-bullying message is posted and enforced in each classroom in the form of our Friendship Pledge. Each morning the students say the Friendship Pledge to promote the Golden Rule.

1. I will treat others with kindness and respect.
2. I will offer help to anyone who needs it.
3. I will include others in games and activities throughout the day.
4. I will inform a trusted adult if I have a problem or see anyone else having a problem.
5. I understand that we are all important members of God’s family and the St. Margaret Mary School Family.

CONSEQUENCES FOR BULLYING:

First Offense	Bullying incident report will be sent home to parents.	Students receiving the report will make amends to the victim.
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	Parents will be contacted by the teacher and/or principal to discuss the incident. After School Detention will be assigned.	Teacher will verify that this was done.
Second Offense	Bullying incident report will be sent home to parents. Parents will be contacted about the incident. Teacher, principal and/or school counselor will meet with the student. In School Suspension (ISS) will be assigned.	Students will discuss the incident with the principal and counselor. Behavior plan will be implemented. Check-ins and follow ups will be administered by the school counselor.
Third Offense	Discretion of the administration to assign an Out of School Suspension (OSS) or expulsion.	Students will be referred to out-patient therapy and may be admitted back to school with verification of appointment.

Because each situation is unique, and we are dealing with a wide age range of students, the school has the right to adjust these consequences as we see fit.

Along with having our policy posted in each classroom, we also have age-appropriate anti-bullying posters throughout our hallways. Teachers go over these rules and procedures at the beginning of each year. We use videos and role playing activities across the curriculum including Second Step and Common Sense to educate students in this area. We put great emphasis on the job of each student to be a responsible reporter when they see bullying occur. Bullying occurs most often when an adult is not present. This is why we train students in responsible reporting, and we encourage them to seek out a trusted adult when there is a bullying issue. The name of students who report bullying is always kept confidential.

NOTE: Not all “incidents” are bullying. It is important to understand the difference between bullying and disagreements, misbehavior, and isolated incidents.

BYSTANDERS

Bystanders who are seen encouraging bully behavior are subject to this discipline chart:

	DESCRIPTION OF	BEHAVIOR	
Behavior	Verbal Harassment name calling, gossip, etc) Social Exclusion	Hitting Pushing Shoving Tripping	Severe hitting Physical threats Severe Harassment Cyberbullying
	Disciplinary Action	Disciplinary Action	Disciplinary Action
1st Time	Verbal Warning.	Call to parent	Call the parents/guardians.

	Bullying Form completed ned by parent guardian.	Bullying Form signed by parent	Bullying Form signed by parent Lunch Detention for 1 week
2nd	Bullying Form completed ned by parent/guardian. Lunch Detention	After School Detention conference with parent & principal Bullying Form signed by parent	Suspension out of school for 1 day SST (Student Support Team) Bullying Form signed by parent Counseling in school
3rd Time	Bullying Form completed signed by parent/guardian After School Detention 1 day	ISS Suspension 1 day Bullying Form signed by parent. Referral to School counselor	Suspension out of school for 3 days Extended counseling Bullying Form signed by parent
	additional infractions will result ISS or OSS	additional infractions will result in OSS or extended suspension	additional infractions will result in expulsion

CARE OF BOOKS AND SCHOOL PROPERTY

Each student is required to have a book bag to carry books to and from school. Students are responsible for the proper care of his or her books. **All textbooks must have book covers on them** at all times. Soft-covered workbooks should be covered in clear contact paper. Writing in hard-covered textbooks is not permitted. If a book is lost or damaged, the student/parent may be responsible for reimbursing the school for the cost of the book.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

It is the policy of Saint Margaret Mary School, as well as all of the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Harrisburg, to take reasonable action to prevent and reduce incidents of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse is defined as when an individual acts or fails to prevent something that causes serious harm to a child under the age of 18. This harm can take many forms, such as serious physical injury, serious mental injury, or sexual abuse or exploitation.

All faculty and staff members are mandated reporters and are required by law to report any suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect. All members of faculty and staff completed the required training for Youth Protection for the Diocese of Harrisburg and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

As mandated reporters, the school's first obligation is to the child's welfare. As mandated by the state, the first notification of suspected abuse must be made to the authorities at Childline and the Diocese of Harrisburg. The school will cooperate with Childline and law enforcement officials in cases of child abuse or neglect.

CHRISTIAN LIFE

The whole atmosphere of Saint Margaret Mary School reflects the spirit of Christian life and learning. The building of a faith community in which the students can experience the living of the Gospel is paramount. The rite and ritual of worship permeates each child's life. Attendance at Mass allows students the opportunity to listen to God's Word in Scripture and to strengthen their personal lives through the reception of the Eucharist. Children delight in joining their parish community at Mass, as well as take pride in participating as a lector, altar server, gift bearer, or choir member. The students have the opportunity to experience God's love and forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which is scheduled twice a year. Prayer becomes a lived experience each day as students develop their understanding of prayer. Non-Catholic students participate in all aspects of the religious education program.

Sacramental Preparation

In the second grade, the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Eucharist are celebrated. Confirmation is celebrated in the eighth grade. The candidates receive two years of instruction, combining their heightened sense of knowledge of their faith with service, as they continue to grow in the life of the Church.

CLASS PARTIES

Parties may be scheduled during the school year celebrating Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. The teacher and homeroom parents are responsible for the planning and celebration of the parties. Any other celebration must have the prior approval of the school principal. Students are not permitted to distribute personal party invitations in the classroom unless the entire class is invited, or if either all boys or all the girls in the class are invited.

CLUBS/ACTIVITIES

Many opportunities for service, social interaction, and growth are available at St. Margaret Mary School.

- Band (grades 4-8)
- Cantor Club
- Cheerleading (grades 5-8)
- Chess (grades 5-8)
- Choir (grades 4-8)
- Coding and Robotics (grades 7-8)
- CYO Basketball (grades 3-8)
- CYO Track (grades 3-8)
- Forensics (grades 7-8)
- Girls on the Run (grades 3-6)
- Math 24 (grades 4-8)
- Pro-Life Club (grades 4-8)
- Quiz Bowl (grades 6-8)
- Science Explorers
- Scouts (grades 1-8)
- Spring Musical (grades 5-8)

- Student Council (grades 4-8)
- Textile Club

CODE OF CHRISTIAN CONDUCT

The Catholic Church and this Catholic School recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children and that the education of students is a partnership between parents and the school. The students' interest in receiving a quality, morally based education can be served if students, parents and school officials work together. Our school is committed to providing an environment that educates, nurtures, and supports students according to the basic Christian principles of charity and love of neighbor. Everyone involved in the development of children and youth— parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, family and friends—is expected to behave in accordance with these principles.

It shall be an express condition of enrollment that students behave in a manner, both on and off campus that is consistent with the Christian principles of the school. These principles include, but are not limited to, the policies, principles or procedures set forth in our school's handbooks.

It shall also be expected that the parents/guardians of a student follow the standards of conduct that are consistent with the Christian principles of the school. These principles include, but are not limited to the policies, principles or procedures set forth in our school's handbooks.

Our codes of conduct for members of our school community were developed to promote a learning environment based on reverence, respect, discipline, responsibility and excellence. As a partnership, we all need to understand the importance of a good working relationship.

In most cases, differences can be resolved. In some rare instances, however, if, in the opinion of the administration, the partnership is irretrievably broken because of the severe nature of the conduct, the school reserves the right to disenroll a family.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a reminder to all members of the community of the expected conduct, so that we may continue to thrive, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect.

Our Christian principles provide that all members of our school community:

- Work courteously and cooperatively with the school to assist the student in meeting the school's academic, moral, and behavioral expectations
- Communicate and respectfully express concerns about the school operation and its personnel in a constructive and Christian manner within an appropriate setting.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS

To maintain a Catholic academic atmosphere:

As a student of Saint Margaret Mary School I will

- Treat others as Jesus would treat me.
- Respect my teachers, volunteers, school personnel and fellow students.
- Obey the rules of my school, home and community.
- Strive to be honest with others and myself.
- Develop good study habits and work to the best of my ability.

- Maintain good sportsmanship.
- Take proper care of personal, school, and classmates' property.
- Observe the dress code.
- Maintain orderly and quiet behavior in the hallways and locker area.
- Observe bus regulations.
- Walk on the right side of hallways and stairs.
- Be quiet in the hallways, on the stairs, and in the restroom.
- Use the steps properly, taking one step at a time.
- Greet all adults and students when you pass them.
- Hold doors for those following you.
- Report serious problems to a trusted adult.

As a student of St. Margaret Mary School I will refrain from

- Opening locked doors to let adults into the building, even if they are familiar. Inform an adult right away.
- Chewing gum on school property.
- Using cell phones or other electronic devices during school hours, unless given permission for instructional use.
- Fighting.
- Cheating.
- Using tobacco products, e-cigarettes/vaping, alcohol, drugs, and narcotics.
- Leaving school without permission.
- Using obscene language and gestures.
- Carrying or using a weapon or anything that could cause bodily harm (Diocesan Policy #5114).

Regarding classroom manners, I will

- Be on time.
- Upon entering the classroom, go directly and quietly to my seat and prepare for the school day.
- Complete all assignments on time.
- Comply with the teacher's directives.
- Use my time wisely for my own growth and that of others.
- Obtain the owner's permission before borrowing anything.
- Be courteous at all times.
- Share the responsibility for keeping my classroom clean.
- Cooperate with my teacher in making the teaching-learning experience a creative and pleasant one.
- Be prepared with necessary covered books and materials for class.

Regarding morning arrival, I will

- Report to my classroom no earlier than 7:30 AM.

- Consume all food and drink items before arriving at school. (i.e. Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, Sheetz, food/drink from home). All food items need to be disposed of properly before entering the school building.
- Stay quietly busy until prayers and announcements begin.
- Participate in morning prayers and announcements.

Regarding Mass/Liturgies/Assemblies, I will

- Walk to and from liturgies and assemblies in an orderly, quiet, and respectful manner.
- Be attentive, reverent, and prayerful in Mass.
- Show politeness and respect toward speakers and performers at all times.
- Participate in assemblies, liturgies, and school functions through actions such as singing, listening, reciting, and praying appropriately.

Regarding restroom facilities, I will

- Use the facility with care and consideration for others.
- Tend to my needs quickly without loitering.
- Bring no objects that will cause damage or deface the property.
- Use good lavatory manners: flush, wash, and throw away your trash in the trash can.

Regarding lunch, I will

- After entering the cafeteria, ask permission from the principal or a teacher if there is a reason to leave.
- Stand calmly when waiting in line for a hot lunch.
- Sit in my assigned area of the cafeteria.
- Remain seated while eating, using a conversational tone of voice.
- When directed, leave my assigned place clean with the chair in its proper position. Throw all trash away.
- Obey and respect the teachers, principal, and the parent volunteers at all times.
- Use manners when I talk to those who serve in the cafeteria. Remember “please” and “thank you”.
- Use polite table manners.
- Eat my own food and refrain from trading food with others.

Regarding recess, I will:

- Bring the proper clothing needed for the outdoors to the cafeteria. (During the winter months, a hat, gloves, and coat are requested.)
- Observe fair play with everyone.
 - Include others who are easily left out.
 - Be a responsible reporter.
- Stay in the section of the play area assigned to my class.
- Avoid fighting or pushing another student and pulling on another’s clothing.
- Refrain from throwing any objects other than the balls provided. (Mulch, rocks, and sticks are never to be picked up or thrown).

- Stop playing and stand at attention when the first whistle is blown. At the second whistle, walk quietly to the proper line and wait to be dismissed.
- Never leave the play area to retrieve a ball.
- Use the play equipment safely and correctly. (PreK-Grade 1 will use equipment bags at Little Valley only).
- Follow the rules of the playground equipment.
Slides- One child at a time. No walking up or down the slides.
Monkey Bars- One way traffic only!

Certain behaviors are serious and must be brought to the immediate attention of the principal and/or head teacher. These include, but are not limited to: cursing, physically fighting, bullying, and willful destruction of play equipment. Minor infractions can be handled by the teacher in charge.

Regarding dismissal, I will:

- Car riders: Walk quietly in my line to the gym.
- Bus riders: Walk quietly to the bus hall and stay in my line.

In order to support a Christian and safe school environment, the following behaviors are inconsistent with the Christian principles of the school and, therefore, are unacceptable:

- Physically or verbally intimidating a member of the school community
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the school or any of the students/parent/staff at the school on any social media sites (Any concerns are to be addressed through the appropriate channels)
- Abusive and/ or threatening electronic, written or verbal communication
- Disruptive behavior which interferes or threatens to interfere with the operation of the classroom, office, or any other area of the school property

DISCIPLINE

We believe that Saint Margaret Mary School provides a Christian atmosphere of love, trust, acceptance, and mutual respect. The parents must model Christian living, since they are the first teachers with the greatest influence on their children. In addition, the faculty acts as a model of the Gospel values inherent in our faith for students through their actions and teaching.

We realize that our students are still in formation, and that as they grow and mature, they need to be guided toward self-discipline. A Christian, positive, and consistent approach to discipline will lead our students to make responsible choices. As they mature, they will reflect Gospel living and learn to look beyond themselves to principled living as exemplified by Jesus. Ultimately, our goal is that students, intellectually and spiritually, will become productive members of society who will give service to God.

Application of Discipline

Students are expected to conform to school regulations. There are times when admonishment is necessary, such as when students' behavior is disruptive or interferes with the learning environment. No student has the right to interfere with the education of fellow students. It is the responsibility of each student to respect the rights of teachers, students, administrators and all others who are involved in the educational process (PA Code 12.2b).

Students learn self-discipline and responsibility through the following means:

- Cooperation in class by obeying the school and the teacher's regulations
- Respect for themselves, others, school property, and the property of others.
- Developing a climate within the school that is conducive to wholesome learning and living (PA Code 12.2a)

The school has an obligation to provide a safe and orderly environment that will enable each student to progress at a rate commensurate with his or her own ability. The rights of an individual must be carefully considered and individual expression encouraged. When such expression interferes directly or indirectly with the rights of others, appropriate steps will be taken.

Disciplinary Measures

Communications between teachers and parents/guardians will take place to inform parents/guardians of the students involved about behavior problems as they occur. In individual cases, a reprimand, in the form of a Reflect and Correct form, detention, or a note home will be the responsibility of the classroom teacher. Detentions are issued at the discretion of the teacher for willful and/or repeated violation of school regulations. All offenses will be recorded under the discipline tab in Rediker and parents/guardians will automatically receive email notification. Additional reprimands resulting from continued or more serious offenses will involve parents/guardians, and the principal. The principal determines the specific disciplinary step.

When a parent/guardian feels that an issue or circumstance has developed which is interfering with their child's ability to profit from the educational experience at St. Margaret Mary School, the parent/guardian is asked to first consult with the teacher before contacting the principal. Parents/guardians may contact the teacher and request an appointment via the school telephone, teacher email, or a written note. If the problem cannot be resolved with the teacher, the opportunity to discuss the issue with the principal may be requested.

In cases where serious disagreement between the school and parents cannot be resolved amicably, it will be necessary to adhere to the following protocol:

- Consult with teacher
- Consult with principal
- Consult with pastor
- Consult with Diocese of Harrisburg, Department of Education

In cases where the conflict cannot be resolved or the conduct of parents is deemed to interfere with the mission of the school, St. Margaret Mary School reserves the right to require parents to withdraw their child from school. All policies are mandated through the Diocese of Harrisburg. For details on Student Discipline Policies, please visit: www.hbgdiocese.org.

Reflect and Correct

Reflect and Correct forms are issued to the student for minor conduct and uniform infractions. Reflect and Correct slips may also be issued for not completing class assignments, homework, repeatedly not returning correspondences between home and school, or arriving at school late without a written excuse, etc. All minor misconducts for grades 4-8 will be recorded under the discipline tab in Rediker. For policy violation or for unacceptable behavior, students may be detained during lunch/recess or after school depending on the severity of the action.

Detention

Detentions will be issued for behavior/infractions above and beyond minor conduct or uniform fractions (See Student Code of Conduct). Parents/guardians will receive notification regarding detentions through their Parent Portal. It is also the student's responsibility to notify his/her parents/guardians about the detention. Detentions are held Wednesdays from 3:00 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Parents have the responsibility for arranging transportation for the detention. Students are responsible for arriving on time for detention and parents are responsible for picking up students on time. Students will be sent to and charged for ASTEP if not picked up on time.

- Wednesday afternoon pick-up is promptly at 3:45 p.m. at the cafeteria door. (door #7)

While the violation of any of the school regulations is considered to be a serious matter, there are violations that are intolerable. Every effort is made to counsel students and parents so that drastic measures, such as in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion, will not be necessary. However, occasions may arise when such action is in the best interest of all.

Definition of Disciplinary Terms

In-School Suspension (ISS)– The exclusion of a student from class for a specified period of time usually lasts from one to five days. Students in ISS require monitoring by a qualified professional. Remuneration for the proctor of ISS will be covered by the parents/guardians. The student eats lunch and does all the school assignments in a room provided by the principal. Students may not participate in any school activities during this time.

ISS may be assigned after 5 detentions. Students with repeated ISS will be subject to loss of privileges such as field trips, Track & Field Day, school socials and special assemblies.

Out of School Suspension (OSS)– The removal of a student from school for a specified period of time. Students may not participate in any school activities during this time.

Expulsion – The permanent dismissal of a student by the decision of the principal in consultation with the pastor.

Categories of Misconduct

The following are the categories of misconduct which may result in an ISS, OSS, or expulsion. These categories are general in nature and are not deemed to be all-inclusive:

• **Matters relating to public and private property** – Examples: theft; misuse of books, materials and equipment; defacing property; trespassing (unauthorized presence in the

building/classroom); and willful, malicious destruction of the property of the school or another person. Restitution of damages will be demanded.

· **Matters pertaining to citizenship** – Examples: Violation of state laws, local ordinances, approved safety and fire codes, laws pertaining to civil disobedience; use of profane and obscene language; possession, selling and/or use of drugs, narcotics and/or controlled substances, tobacco products, e-cigarettes or any vaping devices, or alcoholic beverages; engaging in immoral conduct (including inappropriate public displays of affection); physically threatening and/or actually abusing any student or staff member; cheating; extortion; fighting; persistent disobedience; gross misbehavior - conduct detrimental to the normal functioning of the school or school activities; possession of pornography; sexual harassment; and Internet violations.

Matters pertaining to technology - Examples: Any online harassment, teasing, threatening, bullying, or humiliation of another person, no matter where the incident occurs, which is brought to the attention of anyone in the school, will result in school and possibly legal disciplinary action.

· **Matters pertaining to attendance** – Examples: Violation of compulsory attendance laws; persistent tardiness (See attendance policy); and failure to attend school regularly.

· **Matters concerning threats** – A threat to inflict violence on oneself or another person will be investigated immediately by the school. Appropriate measures will be taken to insure the safety of all persons involved.

- A threat to harm oneself will be referred to the school counselor and to crisis management.
- A threat to others will result in a police investigation to determine if the threat is credible.
 - If a threat is determined to be credible, the student(s) involved may be suspended/expelled/asked to withdraw from school and may be subjected to criminal charges related to the offenses.

· **Matters concerning other serious offenses** - Any other action or conduct which is deemed to be inappropriate will be subject to discipline by the school in its sole discretion. Students may be suspended/expelled/asked to withdraw from school for serious offense. After consultation with the superintendent, the principal with the pastor has the authority to expel a student. The student and parents will be informed of the in-school suspension or expulsion. Should a student be accused of a serious or criminal violation whether inside or apart from school, the student may be placed on home study until the matter has been resolved, or another determination has been made by the administration. Any student who is placed on home study may not participate in school activities until the matter is resolved or a determination is made by the administration.

Diocesan Policy on Expulsion

Expulsion is viewed as a radical action in which the school feels the student's interest would be better served in another environment, or that the student's behavior is a serious threat

to the school community. Expulsion is invoked as a last resort after the matter has been referred to the superintendent.

Parents/guardians have the right to appeal the expulsion of their student to a special Review Board consisting of two School Board members and one Parish Council member. The Review Board shall not have any direct involvement in the case, for example, the pastor, principal, teacher or relative of the student.

The task of the Review Board is to hear both sides of the case and to render impartial judgment as to whether or not the procedures and policies were followed.

The parents/guardians have ten days from the reception of the expulsion notice to request an appeal. The request must be made in writing and addressed to the principal. The hearing is to be held as soon as conveniently possible for all parties. Legal counsel or other support personnel are not admitted to an appeal before the Review Board. The Review Board will determine whether the school administration has followed appropriate policies and procedures, and confirm the expulsion. They may determine that the facts do not sustain the decision to expel the student, and recommend that the administration rescind the expulsion.

Saint Margaret Mary School reserves the right to enforce its regulations in a manner best suited to the individual situation and in accordance with the regulations of the Diocesan Board of Education.

Safe Schools Act of 1997

Pennsylvania legislation dealing with school crime and safety issues:

- **Record Keeping** – Non-public schools must keep records of incidents involving violence. A statistical summary of the record must be available to the public upon request.
- **Sworn Statement** – Parents enrolling a child in public school must give a sworn statement that their child was not under suspension or expulsion.
- **Student Records** – Public schools must automatically transfer a student's discipline record, without parental permission. St. Margaret Mary School will continue to observe the general practice of not forwarding a student's discipline file with academic records, with the following exceptions: A student involved with the possession of a weapon, the sale or possession of controlled substances, or involved with an act of violence which posed a potential threat to others. St. Margaret Mary School will send an advisement of these situations to any school a student transfers to, either in the case of expulsion or voluntary withdrawal of the student. (This policy reflects our commitment to the Safe Schools Act of 1997).

Alerting Law Enforcement

St. Margaret Mary School will notify the local law enforcement authorities and the Diocesan Educational Office when a weapon is discovered on school grounds. If a student under our care, parent/guardian, or staff member brings any type of weapon to school or threatens to use any school materials as a weapon toward another student, staff member or volunteer, the item will be confiscated and the individual will be escorted to the principal's office and law enforcement will be contacted. Parents/guardians of students involved will be contacted first, then families will be made aware of any situation. It is St. Margaret Mary School's responsibility to protect the privacy of the student and family so as to not impede the investigation process.

DRESS CODE

A uniform Dress Code in our Catholic school emphasizes the importance our Church teaches us regarding the equality of all. As a member of St. Margaret Mary School, each student is expected to follow the established guidelines.

Students are expected to present a neat and clean appearance. The dress code has been devised to help parents and students avoid confusion about what is to be worn to school. Each student is required to wear the complete uniform on the first day of school and thereafter, unless otherwise directed by the principal. When a student is not in uniform attire, the parent should send a note explaining the reason. Children in **kindergarten** wear neat and clean play clothes. Tattoos and other markings are never permitted on a student.

School Uniform

School uniforms are worn by all students in grades 1 through 8 **to and from school and on all school days** except on the designated Physical Education day. A uniform exchange is held each August before school starts. School uniforms, including sweater vests and sweaters, are to be purchased at Flynn & O'Hara Uniform Company located in Harrisburg.

GIRLS:

Grades 1-8:

- Navy uniform shorts in September and May (Optional)
- Navy uniform slacks from October through April (Optional)
- Light blue long or short-sleeved uniform shirts may be worn with slacks and shorts
- *Makeup*: no makeup may be worn (including lip gloss)
- *Jewelry*:
 - Earrings must be smaller than a dime
 - No dangling earrings
 - One earring per ear
 - Necklaces must be of a religious nature
 - One ring per hand
 - One bracelet per wrist
- *Hairstyles*:
 - **no eccentric hairstyles, including hair coloring, highlights or head decorations.**
 - **Fad cuts, extensions and attachments are not permitted.**
 - **Headbands must be the same print as the uniform or a solid color that matches the uniform such as navy, green, white, black.**
 - **Bright neon colors, large bows, or other hair accessories are not permitted.**
- *Watches*: a watch may be worn. Smart technology watches, including Apple watches, and any other devices that connect to the internet are not permitted to be worn in school.
- No baggy sweaters or short skirts; skirts should not be shorter than one inch above the knee.

- Only short, natural nails are permitted.
- Nail polish, nail tips, and fake/acrylic nails are not permitted at any time.

All students are required to wear all black, all leather sneakers.

Grades 1-4: Uniform

- Green/blue uniform plaid jumpers and round-collared, light blue short or long-sleeved blouses.
- Navy cardigan, v-neck sweater or vest.
- Navy or white knee socks or tights: no sport socks, no-shows, or low cuts

Grades 5-8: Uniform

- Light blue, button-down oxford shirt, uniform pleated skirts.
- A navy v-neck sweater must be worn from October through April. A cardigan or v-neck sweater may be worn in place of the vest.
- Navy or white knee socks or tights: no sport socks, no-shows, or low cuts

BOYS:

Grades 1-8:

- Navy dress uniform pants.
- Navy or dark socks over the ankle: no sport socks, no-shows, or low cuts
- Navy uniform shorts in September and May (Optional).
- A belt must be worn and shirts must be tucked in at all times.
- *Earrings:* earrings are not permitted
- *Hairstyles:* **Hair must be neat, well-groomed, trimmed around the ears, off the collar, and one inch above the eyebrows.**
 - Hair must be no longer than 2 inches in height.
 - Hair must be neat, well-groomed, trimmed around the ears, off the collar and one inch above the eyebrows.
 - Blunt cuts, shaved heads, tails, bowl cuts and spiked hair are not permitted.
 - Hair must be blended and layered in a conservative male haircut and nothing less than #2 blade.
 - Fad haircuts, styles, buns, ponytails, extensions and attachments are not allowed. Faux hawk styles, mohawk styles, mullets, designs and cutouts and drastic changes in length are not permitted
 - No hair coloring, highlighting or facial hair is permitted. Sideburns may not extend beyond the middle of the ear.
 -
- *Watches:* a watch may be worn. Smart technology watches, including Apple watches, and any other devices that connect to the internet are not permitted to be worn in school.

All students are required to wear an all-black, leather sneaker. Students are not permitted to wear moccasin type, slipper-like, sandals, crocs, clogs or boots. Shoes should not have glitter, sequins, beads or bows.

Grades 1-4: Uniform

- Light blue long or short-sleeved knit uniform shirts.
- Navy cardigan, v-neck or vest (optional).

Grades 5-8: Uniform

- Light blue short or long-sleeved button-down oxford uniform shirts.
- A navy v-neck sweater vest must be worn from October through April. A cardigan or v-neck sweater may be worn in place of the vest.

Grades 7-8: Uniform

- Light blue short or long-sleeved button-down oxford uniform shirts.
- A navy v-neck sweater vest must be worn from October through April. A cardigan or v-neck sweater may be worn in place of the vest.
- Navy ties.

Please have names on all items, particularly gloves, hats, sweaters, warm-ups, and lunch boxes.

Dress Out of Uniform Days

Dress out of Uniform Days will be announced via monthly calendar, Rediker, and school announcements. We appreciate the effort of parents/guardians to check that all clothing worn to school is clean, modest and appropriate.

Please refrain from wearing:

- Jeans or leggings with holes/frays/cutouts
 - Leggings may only be worn with a shirt that is fingertip length
- “Cold-shoulder” tops
- Shorts except for May and September
- Crop tops
- Any attire that allows for the display of undergarments
- Garments with offensive wording/images
- Hats/caps of any kind
- No baggy, washed-out, slouchy pants or sweaters.

Physical Education Uniform

Students must wear the uniform shorts, shirts, sweatpants and sweatshirts purchased from Flynn and O’Hara Uniform Store in Harrisburg. Spirit Wear apparel purchased for athletic teams are **NOT** official physical education uniforms.

- Sweatpants and sweatshirts must be worn from October to April.
- Sneakers and athletic socks above the ankle must be worn to Physical Education class.

Failure to follow these guidelines will result in disciplinary actions as well as affect the student’s PE grade (grades 4-8).

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency contact information must be properly completed and updated on Rediker as needed throughout the school year. Any change in name, address, email, phone number, or emergency contacts should be updated on Rediker, and the school office should be notified.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSING

Should there be an occasion when weather or some other emergency necessitates a delayed opening, closing, or early dismissal of school; parents are notified via phone, text, and email. **Saint Margaret Mary School follows the decision of the Central Dauphin School District for weather related delays and closings. In the event of a school closure, a virtual or flexible instruction day (FID) will take place. Students will receive login/assignments on Google Classroom.** Closings and delays will be posted on the school facebook page and local news stations.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are scheduled throughout the year. Field trips are privileges, not rights, and students can be denied participation if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements. The decision to attend a field trip will be made by the teacher and the principal. Parents of children participating in school-sponsored trips are required to sign a permission form as mandated by the Diocese of Harrisburg. A child who does not return a signed permission form will not be permitted to go on the trip. Verbal permission will not be accepted as a substitute for the signed school permission slip. If the child chooses not to participate in the field trip, he/she is still required to attend school unless arrangements have been made. All trips are to be made in public licensed carriers or school buses adequately chaperoned by adults. The teacher will collect any fees necessary to offset the cost of the field trip. Proper attire for all field trips will be discussed before each field trip.

FRIENDLY REMINDERS

A friendly reminder slip will be sent home to remind parents and students about minor infractions. This is the first notification if a student has a uniform infraction, did not return a test folder, did not bring an absent note, and did not return office forms. If compliance is not met, a Reflect and Correct will be issued.

GRADE REPORTS

Grade reports are issued three times per year in December, March, and June. Grades are based on class work, homework, projects, and test results.

Grades K-3

- Progress reports will be sent home with each student to be reviewed and signed.
- Grade reports will be posted in the Student/Parent Portal under E-Locker at the end of each trimester.

Grades 4-8

- On-going progress may be accessed through Rediker.
- Grade reports will be posted in the Student/Parent Portal under E-Locker at the end of each trimester.

HOME-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

In September of each year, St. Margaret Mary School holds a Back-to-School Night. At this meeting, teachers present their educational goals for the year to parents/guardians. It is important for parents/guardians to attend this meeting.

Parents/guardians are always encouraged to meet with teachers to discuss the progress of their child. To make an appointment, parents may contact a teacher via the school telephone, teacher email, or a written note to the teacher. Teachers will schedule before or after school conferences; however, any contact made with a teacher during school hours should allow for a 24 hour response time.

All correspondence between school and home concerning calendars, upcoming events, and important forms to be signed and returned to the school office will be done electronically through our website via e-envelope each Thursday night at midnight. **All parents/guardians should check e-envelope each week for parish/PTO correspondence. The Rediker Student/Parent Portal contains the school calendar, announcements, notifications, student attendance, grades and discipline. These are updated daily.**

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC PROGRAM

Music offers cultural and social advantages to young people. Information concerning the school band program for the school year is sent to parents in September. This program is open to students in grades 4-8.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Pennsylvania law requires that every child attending school in grades pre-kindergarten through 8th must be properly immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, and rubella.

Written proof from a physician of the following immunizations is necessary:

- **Diphtheria, tetanus** – four or more properly spaced doses of DPT or DT; the fourth being after the fourth birthday.
- **Polio** – three or more properly spaced doses of oral polio vaccine
- **MMR** (measles, mumps, and rubella) – one administered after 12 months of age
- **MMR2** – prior to entrance of kindergarten
- **Hepatitis B Vaccine** – three properly spaced doses prior to entrance to Kindergarten
- **Varicella Immunity** – Varicella vaccine, or history of disease, or Serologic confirmation of Immunity. Pennsylvania state law requires a physical examination for all students in kindergarten, or original entrance in grade one, grade six, and transfer students from other states.

Health Records and Illness at School

A full-time nurse is available to provide minor first aid. When a student becomes ill during school hours, the student is sent to the school office, and if necessary a parent is notified. School health forms are to be kept current on the parent portal on Rediker..

Parents of children with special medical needs (i.e. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, etc.) must notify and instruct the school nurse, teachers, and principal on how to handle emergency situations pertaining to their child's specific health needs.

A scoliosis assessment is provided for students in grade 7. A hearing test is conducted as required by the Central Dauphin School District or at the request of a parent. All new students to the school are tested. A dental exam is required for all students in grades K, 3, and 7.

A school nurse is provided by the Central Dauphin School District on a part time basis. Students' height, weight, and vision are checked annually. The school nurse will adhere to the Central Dauphin School District Health Policy.

Medication Policy

School personnel will only administer medication, including non-prescription medicine, if specific written instructions are received from a physician and accompanied by a note signed by a parent or legal guardian.

Where medication is to be administered, the following applies:

- The original medication containers must be labeled with the student's name, instructions for administration, content identification, and name of physician.
- The parent or guardian must request in writing that school personnel dispense medication as ordered.
- The school nurse or, in her absence the principal or her designee, shall administer the medication or arrange to assist the student.

Please do not send your child to school if he or she is ill. If your child has a fever (100 or above), he/she should remain at home until the child's temperature has been normal for at least 24 hours. If your child has the stomach flu they must be symptom free for 24 hour before returning to school.

Communicable Diseases in Children and Personnel

Diseases requiring a physician's consent to return to school:

Conjunctivitis	Dysentery	Polio
Diphtheria	Tuberculosis	Typhoid
Smallpox	"Ringworm"	Impetigo
Salmonellosis	Pediculosis (Head Lice)	

HIV/AIDS or Related Diseases

Students who are HIV-infected, have AIDS or other related diseases and desire to attend a diocesan elementary school will not be denied admission to or discriminated against solely because of their medical condition. However, the school does deserve the right to dismiss a student or curtail student activity. Steps will be taken on an individual basis by the principal in consultation with the student's attending physician.

Parents or guardians are required to inform the principal that their child has HIV/AIDS or related diseases in order that the school principal can provide for the protection of the child

and other individuals in the school. If, for reasons of health or safety, a student can no longer continue to attend classes, the principal and the parents will determine arrangements for alternative instruction.

The school follows the Universal Precautions to Prevent the Spread of Infectious Disease to reduce the risk for employees, volunteers, and students. Instruction on HIV/AIDS shall be included as part of the school curriculum for all students on an age-appropriate basis.

St. Margaret Mary School reserves the right to amend this policy to comply with directives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Central Dauphin School District policies with regard to **Cough Drops** and **Field Trips**:

- **Cough Drops**: are dispensed from the school nurse. All students are required to have a note from the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian should place the cough drops in a Ziploc bag properly marked with the name of the student and the homeroom.
- **Field Trips**: Oly emergency medications such as Epi-Pens and inhalers will be sent on field trips; a first-aid kit is also on board. All daily or over the counter medication wil remain at school.

Insurance

An optional insurance plan is offered through the diocese. In the event of an accident, a report must be completed and the principal will be notified immediately. Claims must be forwarded to the insurance company within ninety days.

INTERNET AND COMPUTER USE POLICY

The Internet is a public forum with unrestricted access. For this reason, the school restricts permission for the posting of information related to the school, our staff, and our students on the Internet. No person is permitted to use the image of the school, the school logo or seal, photos of school staff or students in any form on the Internet, or in any form of electronic communication without specific written permission from the administration.

The posting of any such information on any website, bulletin board, social media platforms, or other messaging system without permission, or the posting or transmission of images or information in any form related to the school, staff, or students that are defamatory, scandalous, pornographic, or which could be construed as threatening or damaging the character of another person is prohibited. Any person involved in the posting or transmission of such material is subject to disciplinary action, including expulsion, deemed appropriate by the administration at the school and/or by the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Students in grades Pre-K 3-8 will need a signed consent form for the use of a G-Suite email that will be used for G-Suite, Google Classroom, and Rediker.

LIBRARY

All students are encouraged to use the library during their scheduled time. Reference books may be used in the library. Parents/guardians should remind their child of their personal responsibility to return borrowed materials on time. The student shall pay compensation for

damage to books beyond reasonable repair, as well as for lost books. A Book Fair is held in September and during Catholic Schools Week.

LOST AND FOUND

A student who has lost an item may inquire at the office before or after school and at lunchtime. **Parents/guardians are urged to mark each article of clothing with their child's name and grade**, and when the items are found they can be returned. *Any unclaimed items left for more than a month will be given to charity.* If a book or other school-owned item is lost or damaged, the student will be responsible for reimbursement.

LUNCH PROGRAM

Students may bring their lunch and a drink to school. Hot lunch is served several times a week. An online ordering system is used by our school to post lunch options and take orders for students who wish to purchase hot lunch. **Soda is never permitted. If a fast-food lunch is necessary, healthy choices are encouraged. This is in compliance with the Diocese of Harrisburg and Pennsylvania Wellness Programs.**

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

St. Margaret Mary School abides by the provisions of the Buckley Amendment that gives the parent or student the right to view school records. This also applies to non-custodial parents. In the absence of a court order to the contrary, Saint Margaret Mary School will provide the non-custodial parent with access to the academic records and to other school-related information regarding the child. If there is a court order specifying that there is to be no information given, it is the responsibility of the custodial parent to provide the school with an official copy of the court order.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICIES

In compliance with the Diocesan Board of Education Policy, St. Margaret Mary School shall not discriminate on the basis of race, age, religion, national origin, or disability in the administration of educational policies, admission policies, athletics, or other school programs.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

The objectives of the PTO are to promote the welfare of the students attending St. Margaret Mary School and to foster a closer relationship between parents and teachers. The PTO meets monthly as an executive board. The PTO provides fundraisers for the benefit of the students and the school such as field trips, funds for contests, and school awards. The PTO also sponsors the Spartan Sprint for Education which provides funding for technology and larger school equipment purchases. The principal and pastor oversee the spending. The PTO coordinates parent volunteers, publishes an annual school directory, hosts the annual Back-to-School Night and many other events throughout the year. Information on becoming a member of the PTO can be obtained at the Back-to-School Night in early September. Parents are

encouraged to attend meetings and get involved in PTO events by volunteering their time and talent.

PARENT AND TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parents are encouraged to keep in contact with teachers regarding student progress. A scheduled conference is held in the middle of the first trimester which parents are expected to attend. Parent/Teacher conferences help to identify the child's strengths, allow time to discuss areas in need of improvement, and to develop reasonable goals.

It is the diocesan position that parents (having some defined custody rights) and step-parents may be present at school conferences. If a custodial or non-custodial parent objects to the presence of another step-parent at such a conference, then they must obtain a court order or make a change to the custody agreement that prevents the appearance of the other party at the conference. If parents begin an argument during the conference, the conference is terminated and not rescheduled until the matter is resolved. The school will not be responsible for adjudicating the custody agreements between parents. Our policy is to abide by the determinations of a court in these matters. This description applies to stepparents in a legal marriage (civil or religious). Live-in significant others are not recognized as step-parents.

When it becomes necessary, the staff is willing to confer with parents concerning their child. Teachers may be contacted through the school office; however, they may not accept calls during their teaching time. Teachers will return telephone calls during their non-teaching time or after school. Parents should never contact teachers in their homes.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Students are promoted when they adequately demonstrate mastery of material covered in all or the majority of major subject areas. Promotion is left to the discretion of the teacher and principal.

Students are retained if they have not adequately mastered the subject material in at least two major subjects and do not attend summer school or receive adequate tutoring in the failed subjects. The decision of retaining a pupil is left to the discretion of the teacher, school psychologist, principal, and the parent. The decision will be made after all responsible persons for the child's education have conferred upon the need for retention.

SAFETY DRILLS

Fire drills and emergency drills are conducted at regular intervals throughout the school year. Practice drills are announced at the beginning of the year to model procedures for the students. As the year progresses drills are unannounced so students will respond using the practiced procedures to exit the building safely. These drills ensure that every student will be familiar with the emergency signals and respond appropriately.

SCHOOL PICTURES

Official class pictures of the students are taken in October. Spring pictures are also available for purchase. The dress code for Picture Day will be described in a memo sent home with students prior to Picture Day. Parents are under no obligation to purchase pictures.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Each teacher will distribute a list of necessary school supplies before the start of the school year. Please obtain all items on the supply list provided by the teacher. Parents should check with their child throughout the year to make sure the necessary supplies are still in the child's possession.

SNACKS

Teachers in grades kindergarten through fourth grade arrange a snack time. Children may bring a nutritious snack to school each day. **Sweets/candy of any kind are not permitted.**

In keeping with the Health & Wellness Policy as mandated by the State of PA and the Diocese of Harrisburg, we strongly suggest healthy snacks as the best choice. Fresh fruit and vegetables are always encouraged.

Some suggestions for healthy treats include the following:

Popcorn	crackers	cheese	granola bars	applesauce
Trail mix	fruit	dry cereal	pretzels	

Snacks are not provided through the hot lunch program.

SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

The St. Margaret Mary Athletic Association offers boys and girls basketball and track & field teams that compete in the Harrisburg League of the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). Any grade school students that are members of St. Margaret Mary, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament or St. Matthew parishes are eligible to participate. The CYO basketball season starts in November and ends in mid-March; track and field season starts in April and ends in May.

Girls in grades five through eight make up the St. Margaret Mary School junior varsity and varsity cheerleading squads.

STUDENT COUNCIL

Members of the Student Council are elected by the student body and serve for one year. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students are elected as officers of the council, and students in grades four through eight are elected as representatives to the council. All council members must have a "C" or better in all subject areas and may not have an "I" in Christian Values. The code of the council is to work with the faculty and the students to improve the life of the school. Members of the council are expected to set a good example at all times and are required to help with activities after school hours. Students who have to be removed from student council due to conduct or academic issues, will not be permitted to hold office the following school year.

STUDENT SECURITY

Parents are required to call the school between 7 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. to report their child's absence. Teacher supervision begins at 7:30 a.m.. Students should not arrive at school before this time.

Parents must give advance notice in writing to the homeroom teacher regarding changes in after school student transportation. This includes car riders and bus riders who change their means of transportation for dismissal. A student may not ride another bus home from school unless the parent has contacted the district bus authorities. **A note to the school identifying the change and permission must be submitted in writing to the school office via the homeroom teacher.** No school district will allow a student to ride one of their buses unless the student resides in that district. **Without a written note to change transportation the student will be sent home their usual way. Change of transportation forms are provided on the school website.**

Parents/guardians should not call the school office or contact the teacher via email to notify of a transportation change. **To ensure a change of transportation, the request should be in writing on the day of the change. In the case of an emergency change in transportation, call the school office as soon as possible. Do not email your request to the office or your child's teacher. They may not have the opportunity to check email prior to dismissal. We cannot guarantee a change of transportation can be processed after 2:00 P.M. All changes must be in writing each time.** Students in after school sports programs or activities must provide a written change of transportation note EACH day there is a scheduled practice or activity. One note for the season or school year will not be accepted. Families with more than one student attending St. Margaret Mary School will need a separate note for each of their children.

Students will be sent home via their assigned form of transportation if they do not have written permission for a change. Verbal acknowledgement from students or parents will not be accepted for a change of transportation.

STUDENT WITHDRAWALS AND TRANSFERS

When a withdrawal or transfer of a student occurs or is anticipated for any reason, parents should contact the school office as soon as possible. Parents/guardians should complete the withdrawal form provided by the office. Information must include the exact date of withdrawal, and the name and address of the new school that the child will be attending and reason for withdrawal.

Upon a transfer request, students' records will be mailed to the new school. An exception is made when students transfer to schools in foreign countries. In this case, records may be hand carried in a sealed envelope. Academic records are not forwarded to a new educational placement if tuition payments are not up to date.

STUDY AND HOMEWORK

Students are required to complete homework assignments and projects on time and to the best of their abilities. The amount of homework each night is left to the discretion of the teacher. Suggested time allotments are as follows:

- Grades one and two, 20-30 minutes
- Grades three, four, and five, 35-55 minutes
- Grades six, seven, and eight, 60-90 minutes.

All students in grades 2 -8 are provided with an assignment book in which homework must be recorded daily. Parents are asked to check this book nightly in order to monitor their child.

TELEPHONE/CELL PHONES/ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students and teachers will not be summoned for incoming calls. Important messages will be relayed. Telephone use by students is restricted to urgent situations (forgotten instruments and homework are not considered urgent) and requires the permission of the teacher, principal or school office staff. Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players, and any other electronic devices are not permitted to be in a student's possession during the school day. **Parents should not contact their child via their personal phone during school hours. All communication should be directed through the school office and/or the students' teachers. Cell phones, Apple watches, Fitbits and the like or other electronic devices must be turned off and kept in the backpack or locker at all times.** Any student with a cell phone or piece of electronic device in their possession may receive a detention and it will be confiscated. A parent will be notified and required to pick up the device from the school office.

TRANSPORTATION

Bus

Pennsylvania state law (Act 372) provides for transportation to all students within the district or outside the district boundaries at a distance not exceeding ten miles by the nearest public highway. All school districts that provide busing are required to provide transportation for St. Margaret Mary School students. Buses are provided for children living in Central Dauphin, Susquehanna, Harrisburg, and other school districts. In order to retain bus transportation, students must obey the bus rules and regulations. All bus assignments will be handled by the school office.

Car

To ensure the safety of all students, **parents must park their cars in a parking space and not stop their cars in the driving lane. Parents are responsible for walking their children in grades pre-k-4 to the cafeteria doors (#7). Middle school students are permitted to walk by themselves to the side gym door (#6).**

Change of Transportation

Any change in transportation can only be made through a written note from a parent/guardian. Change of Transportation forms are provided on the school website. **No child's transportation will be changed without a note in writing. A verbal message/conversation with a child will not count as a valid change of transportation. Students will be sent home via their regular assigned**

transportation, as per the emergency information. In the event of an emergency, a parent/guardian may notify the office through the telephone; however, the call should be placed as early in the day as possible and only in an emergency situation. **Do not email your request to the office or your child's teacher. They may not have the opportunity to check email prior to dismissal. We cannot guarantee a change of transportation can be processed after 2:00 P.M. All changes must be in writing each time.**

Dismissal

At dismissal, parents must enter the school parking lot from the Herr Street entrance and park on the Herr Street (south) side of the parking lot. Each family will receive two laminated car rider cards to be used by parents or guardians for pick up.

- Upon arrival for pick up, parents are to stand in the pick-up line. As they approach the front of the line, parents/guardians should make their card visible to the teacher on duty.
- As the students' names are called, they will then exit the gym and meet their parents in the designated area of the parking lot.
- Parents are requested not to enter the building at dismissal time.

At 3:15 students who have not been picked up will be sent to A-STEP and be charged the daily rate. Please call the school office to let us know you will be delayed.

BUS SAFETY REGULATIONS

Students are expected to follow the rules established by the local districts and each individual bus driver. Please consult your school district bus safety regulations.

STMM BUS RULES AND REGULATIONS

Students must ride the assigned bus, stay in the assigned seat, board and leave the bus at the assigned stop. IN CASES OF EMERGENCY ONLY, a written request for a change in the buses must be made to the district bus authorities prior to the day of change. Unless this permission is obtained, the bus driver will refuse to honor written requests from the parent. Only permission from the bus authorities will be honored. If a child does not obtain this permission and misses the assigned bus, he/she will be sent to the school office and the parent will be responsible for providing transportation.

Parents/guardians of students who ride the school bus are asked to review the rules of bus conduct with their children. Parents/guardians should remind their children that breaking these rules could result in suspension or loss of bus riding privileges. The rules are as follows:

- Be on time at the designated school bus stop, arriving five minutes before the bus is due.
- Wait for your bus at a safe place, well off the highway, on the side of the street on which you live. Cross the street to enter the bus only when the bus is stopped and the red flashing signals are lighted.
- Respect the property rights of people who reside at or near the bus stop.
- Do not get into private vehicles with strangers. All school district vehicles are clearly marked.

- Enter the bus in an orderly manner and take your assigned seat. Bus drivers may assign seats.
- Always obey your bus driver.
- Remain in your seat at all times except when boarding and unloading.
- Keep your hands, head and feet inside the bus. Never throw objects in or out of the bus.
- Be courteous to fellow students and the bus driver.
- Use respectful tones and never use profanity or bad language.
- Do not damage or tamper with any parts of the bus. In addition to disciplinary actions from violating this rule, you will be responsible for repair or replacement costs.
- Keep the aisle clear except when entering or exiting the bus.
- Horseplay, fighting, eating, and drinking are strictly forbidden.
- The following items are not permitted in any school vehicle: live animals, weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, flammable liquid, fireworks, firecrackers, smoke bombs, radios, balls, water pistols, spray bottles, and any item too large for students to hold on their laps.
- **Students are not permitted to use cell phones or any other device to take photos, videos or any type of recordings of other students on the bus.**

Any misconduct that could be detrimental to the health or safety of the driver, other students, the bus, or persons outside the bus will not be tolerated and may result in suspension from riding the bus as well as disciplinary consequences at school.

TUITION

In order to provide and maintain a high quality education for all students, it is necessary to charge tuition. A payment plan is available from May-February for the convenience of the family. It is imperative that parents stay current with the payment plan they have selected through Simple Tuition Solutions (STS). All tuition must be paid before a family can re-register for the next school year. Financial assistance is available to those who qualify but may vary from year to year. Parents may contact the tuition manager (tuitionmanager@stmmhbg.org) to discuss financial assistance.

Registration Fee

A non-refundable registration fee is required for each child upon registration or re-registration for each school year. A kindergarten registration fee of \$200 is required. Each student in grades 1-8 is required to pay a \$125.00 registration or re-registration fee. All families who do not pay the tuition in full at the beginning of the year must pay a \$45.00 fee for the Tuition Management Services. **All tuition must be paid before a family will be able to register for the next school year.**

VISITORS

Parents are always welcome at school! To preserve the quality of education, however, interruptions should be minimal. We will not interrupt teachers while classes are in session.

Volunteers: To ensure the safety of all students, the Diocese of Harrisburg mandates that every volunteer complete the *Diocese of Harrisburg, Youth Protection Program Online Training*

Course. **Parents/guardians who have the required diocesan clearances are welcome to visit the school, when invited. When visiting for any reason during the school day, parents must report to and register at the school office first and wear their diocesan badge or receive a visitor's badge.** This is for the safety of the children. If it is necessary to contact a teacher or student, the secretary will make contact to avoid disturbing the learning experience. All transactions are performed through the school office during school hours.

No parent/guardian may visit a classroom before school, during, or after class time without first reporting to the school office.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Volunteers assist in areas where professional training is not necessary. Participation in one or more of the various programs is encouraged and greatly appreciated. Parents, grandparents, senior citizens, and all parish members are invited to become a part of this important program. All volunteers must obtain and maintain a current Youth Protection Badge from the Diocese of Harrisburg to volunteer in the school. **In order to obtain this badge, volunteers must complete the requirements for State Police and Department of Welfare clearances, and view the mandated reporting youth protection video online at [hbgdiocese.org](http://www.stmmparishschool.org/upld/efiles/clearanceProcedures.pdf).** All directions for this process can be found on the school website under the link Youth Protection. <http://www.stmmparishschool.org/upld/efiles/clearanceProcedures.pdf>

YEARBOOK

The annual yearbook will be published and available in mid-May. All yearbook orders will be made online through Balfour, the company that publishes our yearbook. Ordering online is the only way to guarantee a copy of the yearbook. No yearbooks will be sold through the school office.



**Neurofeedback
& Counseling Center**

of Pennsylvania

Sasha Winters, MS CTP NCC LPC
Neurofeedback & Counseling Center of PA
3109 N Front St Harrisburg, Pa 17110
info@neuroandcounselingcenter.com

12th January 2024

Alessandra Smith
c/o Julia Smith
3812 Kramer St
Harrisburg Pa 17109

Dear Ms. Alessandra,

This letter serves as confirmation that you are currently a client with Neurofeedback & Counseling Center of PA. Services have been provided by your assigned therapist; Sasha Winters, MS, CTP, NCC, LPC. Your records indicate that you started services on November 29th, 2023; following a trauma that occurred on 11/17/2023 at school. Your therapist has provided an active diagnosis of Acute Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)-F43.11. Based on symptoms and behaviors that have been reported in session following the event. Since November 29th, 2023, you have attended six (6) sessions in person. Which are scheduled on a weekly basis. Please reach out to our office if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely,


Sasha Winters, MS, CTP, NCC, LPC
Licensed Professional Counselor- Certified Trauma Professional



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4700 Union Deposit Road, Suite 120
Harrisburg, PA 17111-3774
Phone 717.540.1743
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Yoke Y. Tan, MD, FAAP, FRCPC
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Steven R. Heverley, MD, FAAP
Edgar D. Kwee, MD, FAAP
Katrina L. Sciarrone, PA-C

Good Hope Office
2020 Good Hope Road
Enola, PA 17025
Phone 717.761.7901
Fax 717.763.0112

January 18, 2024

To whom it may concern,

Alessondra Smith is a patient under our care at Tan and Garcia Pediatrics. I am writing to request that she be switched to a different homeroom class as well as given accommodations for an alternative to music class (unless there is another music class teacher), pending further evaluation and recommendations by her therapist, Ms. Sasha Winters, LMSW.

Thank you,



Katrina Sciarrone, PA-C