

St. Mary's School



Parent-Student Handbook 2023-2024

St. Mary's School
155 11 Street SW
Medicine Hat, AB T1A 4S2
403-527-7616

<https://www.stmarymh.ca/>



Who We Are	2
Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education (MHCBE)	2
MHCBE Mission Statement	2
MHCBE Mottos	2
MHCBE Vision Statement	2
MHCBE Principles of Practice	2
MHCBE Values	2
St. Mary's School Motto	2
General School Information	3
School Timetable and Bell Schedule	3
School Year Calendar	5
Maps and Tours	1
Arrival and Departure of Students	6
Closed Campus and Student Sign Out	6
Item Drop-Off	7
Lost and Found	7
Assemblies	7
Celebrations and Liturgies	7
Parent Volunteers	7
Student ID Cards	7
Transportation	7
Accidents	8
Accident Insurance	8
Emergency Protocols	8
Library	8
Protocol for Lost/Missing Textbooks	8
Defacing a Textbook or Library Book	8
School Fee Schedule	9
Academic Information and Expectations	9
PowerSchool	9
Reporting Periods	9
Academic Support	9
Parent Teacher Conferences	9
Exams	10
Honour Roll	10
Awards	10
Christian Leadership Award	10
St. Mary's Citizenship Award	11
Highest Academic Achievement Awards	11
Pat Cullen Memorial Scholarship	11



Sister Joan Burns Memorial Scholarship	11
Dedicated Learner Award	11
Fine Arts Awards	11
Athletic Awards	11
Exam Bank	11
School Supplies	11
French Immersion Program	12
Fine Arts Program	12
General Information	12
Selection Process	14
Class Load	14
Fee Schedule	15
Fine Arts Academy Class Load - Grades 7/8/9	15
Alternative Programming	15
Online Learning	16
Student Support Services	16
Lockers and Locks	16
School Web Page	16
Student Services	16
School Resource Officer	17
Life Framework, Diversity Groups, LGBTQ+ Support	17
Student Activities	17
School Activities	17
Extracurricular Activities: Athletics/Musical and Clubs	18
Supervision and Lunch	18
Student Code of Conduct	18
Rights and Responsibilities of Students	19
School Policies	19
School Discipline Policy	19
Parent Inquiries	19
Academic Improvement Policy	20
Academic Honesty Policy (Plagiarism)	20
Student Conduct and Discipline	20
Responsibility of the Student	20
Consequences of Intellectual Dishonesty	21
Dress Policy	21
Technology Policy	22
Personal Electronic Devices	22
Video Surveillance	23
School Telephone	23
Bicycles / Skateboards / Scooters / In-Line Skates	23

Smoking, Vaping, and Tobacco	23
Alcohol/Drug Policy	23
Violence, Weapons and Criminal Offences	24
Suicide Prevention	24
Student Search	24
Damage to Property	25
Attendance Policy	25
School Attendance	25
Responsibilities	26
Student Absences during the School Year	26
Consequences of Excessive Absences	26
Notification of Excessive Absences	26
Late Policy	26
Anti-Bullying Policy	27
Definition of Bullying	27
Bullying Protocol	27
Consequences of Bullying	28
Appeals	29



Who We Are

Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education (MHCBE)

<https://www.mhcbe.ab.ca/>

MHCBE Mission Statement

In partnership with family, church and community, we provide Catholic Education of the highest quality to our students.

MHCBE Mottos

- Showing the Face of Christ to All
- Growing in Faith, Learning, and Community

MHCBE Vision Statement

A Gospel-centered community committed to:

- Learning Excellence
- Christian Service
- Living Christ



MHCBE Principles of Practice

In our ministry we are called, always and everywhere, to:

- Model Christ
- Prayer
- Service
- Strive for Excellence

MHCBE Values

We believe that Catholic education is a ministry that is at the heart of the church. In our ministry we value and celebrate:

- Teaching and living our Catholic faith.
- Our Catholic traditions.
- Our ability to offer a full range of educational programs for all students.
- The uniqueness of each child.

St. Mary's School Motto

Fides et Veritas - Faith and Truth are two character traits that St. Mary's School strives to encourage in all who enter our halls.


General School Information

School Timetable and Bell Schedule

Doors Open 8:45 am

Warning Bell 8:55 am

EXAMPLE Regular Daily Schedule		
8:58 Period 1 9:45	Language Arts	
9:50 Period 2 10:35	Option A	Option B
10:40 Period 3 11:25	Religion	Flex
11:30 Period 4 12:15	Social Studies	
12:15 12:30	Lunch	
12:30 12:47	Break	
12:50 Period 5 1:35	Math	
1:40 Period 6 2:25	Science	
2:30 Period 7 3:15	Physical Education	

EXAMPLE Fine Arts Daily Schedule		
8:58 Period 1 9:45	Religion	Flex
9:50 Period 2 10:35	Math	
10:40 Period 3 11:25	Fine Arts Academy 	
11:30 Period 4 12:15		
12:15 12:30	Lunch	
12:30 12:47	Break	
12:50 Period 5 1:35	Science	
1:40 Period 6 2:25	Language Arts	
2:30 Period 7 3:15	Social Studies	

Student schedules remain mostly the same every day with the exception of Religion/Flex, option courses, and Fine Arts Academy programming. In these instances, courses will alternate on a daily basis.

Religion - Students of all faith backgrounds are welcome at our school! All students, regardless of their backgrounds, take Religious Education.

Flex - Every student takes Flex. Teachers have flexibility to decide what you will learn during these periods. Depending on your teacher and your program, you will learn Health, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), Library, Daily Physical Activity (DPA), have additional option time, do service projects in the community, get academic support, and participate in various other tasks and activities.

Options - Regular program students take two options at a time over three trimesters. This means that in one school year, students take six options courses. Information about Options programming, making choices, etc. is emailed to students after they are registered.

Fine Arts Academy - All Fine Arts students, regardless of Grade, will receive Fine Arts Academy instruction during Periods 3 and 4 every day. Courses include Art, Band, Choral, Dance, and Drama. This allows Fine Arts students and instructors to create flexible groupings based on skill level, subject material, and other factors. Schedules for specific disciplines are also flexible and will change to fit the needs of particular students and classes based on factors such as upcoming performances, special guest presentations, multiple grade-level groupings, etc. See section on [Fine Arts Program](#) below for more information.

School Year Calendar

Check out the [School Year Calendar](#) to see which days are holidays, PD days, etc. and check out [St. Mary's School Calendar](#) to keep up to date on what is happening each day!

Maps and Tours

[St. Mary's School Map](#) - see a basic map of our school.

[St. Mary's School Virtual Tour](#) - explore the school's classrooms and hallways, meet the staff, find out more about the school.

[St. Mary's Welcome Video](#) - meet the Principal and Vice-Principal and take a guided tour of the school.

Arrival and Departure of Students

Students are encouraged to arrive after 8:45 a.m. at which point exterior doors will become unlocked and students may head to their lockers and first period classrooms. Students should enter in the two doors on the wings of the front of the building, or the side door. Please avoid using the front office door; this door is reserved for guests only. If arriving early, students must wait outside their assigned door.

Students are not permitted to remain at the school after hours unless they are participating in a school-sponsored extracurricular activity.

Closed Campus and Student Sign Out

Students are not permitted to leave the school or grounds after their arrival at school in the morning until their regular dismissal time at the end of the day. In order for a student to leave the school during the day, a parent/guardian or approved contact as per their registration contact form **must sign them out** at the school office. All students are to remain in class until called out by the office. Students must sign back in at the office upon return to campus at any time during the school day.

Item Drop-Off

Parents/guardians who are dropping off student belongings (i.e. forgotten lunches, textbooks, etc.) during the day can leave items at the office. The office staff will notify the student and the student will pick up the item at the discretion of the teacher.

Lost and Found

It is very important to put your name on all belongings to avoid loss and theft. This includes inside running shoes, articles of clothing, lunch kits, caps, etc. Students and parents should check the Lost and Found collection when articles are lost. All lost and found items are kept until the end of the first reporting period (Parent Teacher Interviews), Christmas and Easter Holidays, and the end of June. After these times all remaining articles will be donated to charity.

Assemblies

Assemblies will take place weekly for all students. Assemblies may take place on different days and during different periods depending on a variety of factors.

Celebrations and Liturgies

St. Mary's staff and students are resident to both Holy Family Parish and St. Patrick's Parish. Families are encouraged to celebrate Mass at these parishes throughout the school year. Liturgies and Religious Celebrations will be celebrated during assemblies, in classrooms, and at our Parishes as much as possible.

Parent Volunteers

St. Mary's relies on the support of all of its stakeholders. We encourage parents to share their gifts and talents with our school by becoming involved as a volunteer or as a member of the Parent Council. Please contact the office to express your interest in volunteering.

Student ID Cards

Students are given an ID card that allows them to enter various extra - curricular activities. Students are required to show their current student ID cards at all dances.

Transportation

The board provides transportation to students in grades (7-9) who live 2.4 kilometers or more from the school. For information regarding pickup times and locations or other bussing

information please contact **Southland Transportation at 403 526-4655** or visit [Medicine Hat | Southland Transportation Ltd.](#)

The Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education expects all students being transported to follow the rules for school bus passengers; students are expected to act responsibly and respectfully while being transported. Failure to do so will result in a loss of bus privileges. Masks are mandatory for all students on all bus trips. Please refer to [AP 351 Student Conduct - Appendix B Conduct on School Busses](#) for more detailed information.

Accidents

Accidents involving any student during school activities must be reported promptly to the office. Injured students are given every possible care and parents are notified immediately. If parents cannot be notified, and medical treatment is required, board policy permits us to arrange for transportation to take the student to a medical facility.

Accident Insurance

Accident Insurance is available to all students at a low cost. Application forms may be picked up from the administration office early in the fall.

Emergency Protocols

(Lock Down, Hold & Secure, Shelter in Place, Emergency Evacuation)

Emergency Protocols are introduced early in the school year and practiced regularly. Students not complying with these protocols and/or teacher instructions, will be subject to a detention, in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension.

Please sign up for [SchoolMessenger](#) to stay informed. Also, see our [Emergency Response Plan](#) to become familiar with our Hour Zero Emergency Protocols.

Library

The primary purpose of the library is to serve the student as a resource and study center. Library books, Chormebooks, and other materials borrowed should be maintained in good condition and returned promptly. Students will be billed for library materials not returned at the end of the school year. Library hours are 9:00 a.m. to 3:15p.m, Monday-Friday.

Protocol for Lost/Missing Textbooks

If a student misplaces/loses a textbook during the year and requires a replacement, the student should come to the library to get a replacement. The original textbook will be marked as lost and the charge of that textbook will be put on the students' School Cash Online account. If the textbook gets found between the time it is lost to the end of the school year, the charges for the textbook will be refunded by the original payment form (unless it is cash then it will be in the form of a cheque).

Defacing a Textbook or Library Book

The Library’s policy is to charge a repair/replacement fee, accordingly, if a book is damaged in any way. If it is the cover of a textbook, there will be a bill sent home for a rebinding charge.

School Fee Schedule

PROGRAM FEES	
LOCK FEE (grade 7 students, lost lock replacement fee, & new grade 8 and 9 students)	\$15.00
STUDENT ACTIVITY FEE (in lieu of fundraising)	\$30.00
OPTION FEE	\$20.00
INSTRUMENT RENTAL FEE	\$90.00
BAND SUPPLIES/REPAIRS	\$40.00
FINE ARTS ACADEMY FEE	(See Fine Arts Academy below)

Academic Information and Expectations

Detailed information about student evaluation and assessment can be found in [AP 360](#).

PowerSchool

[PowerSchool](#) provides parents and students with up to date information on attendance, quiz marks, exam marks, outstanding assignments, etc. Students and parents /guardians are encouraged to log in frequently as all data is live. All students are responsible for completing homework on time.

Reporting Periods

There are three reporting periods per year: November, March, & June. A variety of assessment techniques will be used to monitor and enhance student progress. If a student is in danger of receiving a low mark in any subject area, teachers will make every attempt to contact parents as soon as possible to encourage intervention prior to the end of the reporting period. Both parents and students can monitor progress online through [PowerSchool](#).

Academic Support

All students are expected to pass all classes and consistently remain in good academic standing. Academic Support is offered during option periods for all students in all grades to ensure students uphold this standard. Academic Support is supervised by a teacher who offers



assistance to students who require additional support beyond that of what a regular classroom teacher can offer.

Parents, teachers, or students themselves can recommend that a student be enrolled in Academic Support. Teachers of all subjects reserve the right to ask a student to attend academic support instead of their regularly scheduled option class. Reasons for this may include, but are not limited to, failing grades, late work, or remedial help.

Additionally, students who are in poor academic standing will automatically be enrolled in Academic Support at the beginning of each trimester. Once students display work that is consistently at an acceptable level, they can ask to be reinstated into their option classes.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent Teacher conferences are held two times per year (November & March) where academic progress and student behaviour are discussed. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to maintain close contact with their child's teachers and are invited to do so whenever they have questions or concerns. Please email the teacher(s) directly from your PowerSchool account or from our school website to schedule an appointment.

Exams

Grade 7 and Grade 8 students write final exams in four subject areas: Math, Social, Science and Language Arts (in two parts, one in May and one in June). These final exams comprise 20% of the student's mark.

Grade 9 students write Provincial Achievement Tests in May and June. Language Arts and Math are in two parts, Social Studies and Science are in one part. These exams comprise 20% of the student's mark.

Honour Roll

The focus at St. Mary's School is on learning and improvement for all students, regardless of their prior abilities or achievements. We are proud of the academic achievements of all of our students regardless of their numerical grade averages.

We recognize exemplary academic achievement with two categories of Honour Roll. *Honours* are awarded for an average of 79.49% to 84.48% in the five core subjects (Religion, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, and Science). In order to achieve *First Class Honours*, a student must achieve an average of 84.49% or higher. These averages are calculated using the stored grades from each reporting Period and marks are cumulative.

Awards

All awards below are sponsored by third parties and are presented at our annual Awards Presentation in September. For academic awards, ties will be broken by using extra considerations at the discretion of school staff.

Christian Leadership Award

Knights of Columbus Dean Fitzpatrick Council

Awarded annually to one student who:

- Demonstrates a servant's heart
- Is able to lead others in a service-oriented manner
- Is an active volunteer in school, church, mission, or social setting
- Has a capacity to make a positive difference in the world

St. Mary's Citizenship Award

Knights of Columbus Joe McKenna Council

Awarded annually to a student who demonstrates exemplary involvement in student activities, extracurricular activities, and also encourages peers to participate.

Highest Academic Achievement Awards

Knights of Columbus Joe McKenna Council (Grade 7 & 8)

John Letourneau Memorial Award (Grade 9)

Awarded annually to the top three students in each grade with the highest overall averages in all five core subjects.

Pat Cullen Memorial Scholarship

Awarded annually to the students in each grade who achieve the highest and second highest mark in Math.

Sister Joan Burns Memorial Scholarship

Awarded annually to the students in each grade who achieve the highest and second highest mark in Religion and demonstrates a faith centred life at St. Mary's School.

Dedicated Learner Award

Knights of Columbus Joe McKenna Council

Awarded annually to a student who demonstrates a steadfast commitment to learning and improvement.

Fine Arts Awards

St. Mary's School Fine Arts Parent Council

Awarded annually to an exemplary student in each Fine Arts discipline in each grade.

Athletic Awards

Knights of Columbus Joe McKenna Council

Awarded annually to one exemplary male and one exemplary female athlete in each grade.

Exam Bank

Our students have access to the Alberta Exam Bank. This is a valuable tool to help students review concepts covered in the curriculum from Grade 7 to Grade 9. The website is www.exambank.com. From here the students will click on Alberta K – 12, click on Practice Tests, click their grade. **Username: mary Password: saint**

School Supplies

Teachers may request additional supplies as needed and supplies may need to be replenished throughout the year.

- Backpack or bag to hold all textbooks and school supplies

- Scientific Calculator (ex. Texas Instruments T1-30IIS)
- P.E. clothes & runners (a St. Mary's T-Shirt is provided to all students)
- 1 drawstring bag & deodorant for P.E.
- Geometry Set (protractor/compass, etc.) – GRADE 7 & GRADE 9 K&E students only
- 2 black Sharpies (regular tip)
- 30 cm ruler
- 10 Blue pens
- 1 Red pen
- Pencil Crayons
- 50 Pencils, Pencil Case & Pencil Sharpener
- Highlighters
- Erasers
- Scissors
- Glue Stick
- White Board Markers - 4 pack minimum
- 1 coiled hole punched notebook (100 page)
- 2-4 Binders (2" or 3")
- 500 Sheets of Narrow Ruled Lined Paper
- Small Pad of Graph Paper
- 10 Binder Dividers
- Reinforcements
- 2 boxes of Kleenex (to be given to homeroom teacher)
- Headphones with a Microphone

French Immersion Program

The French Immersion Program is a second language learning program for students who do not necessarily speak French at home.

- Students entering Grade 7 through 9 should be currently enrolled in a French Immersion program.
- Transportation is provided from Medicine Hat and Redcliff.

Students enrolled in the French Immersion program experience:

- Small class sizes
- All core subjects and Physical Education delivered in French by two fluent French teachers; one a native Francophone, and the other a product of a French Immersion Program
- Depending on enrollment and scheduling, in some school years French Immersion classes may be split-level

Fine Arts Program

General Information

The Fine Arts program at St. Mary's School offers an intense Fine Arts experience delivered by highly trained staff. In addition to their core subjects, students are immersed in Band, Choir, Dance, Drama, and Art and are ambassadors of the school, the division, our city, and of the Fine Arts. Students are continuously in the community; they are frequently asked to perform and are often learning from professionals in the field by taking in shows, going on field trips, and learning from special guests. This program meets the needs of many students: those students who have a keen interest in the arts and enjoy working in them, and those students who see themselves pursuing a career in the Fine Arts.

Furthermore, students also have additional opportunities to experience Regular-stream option programming such as computers, foods, shop, etc. (see Flex above).



This program attracts students from all over the city and surrounding area and continuously receives recognition and awards on local and provincial stages (check out our trophy case next time you're in the building, or, check it out virtually [here](#)).

Check out this video: [A Day In The Fine Arts Academy](#)

To protect the integrity of the program, class sizes are capped and therefore often operate at full capacity. In these situations, students wanting to enter the program are placed on a waiting list and currently enrolled students must meet certain standards. Therefore, to maintain the integrity of the Fine Arts program, parents and students must continuously strive to meet the following:

1. All Fine Arts fees must be paid in full or be arranged to be paid in instalments. In extenuating circumstances, arrangements may be made to have fees waived but these arrangements need to be made in advance.
2. Students must maintain regular and punctual attendance at school including Fine Arts engagements which take place outside regular school hours.
3. Students must be an active participant in all Fine Arts subjects. Active participation is considered to be the regular and ongoing participation in the activities of the Fine Arts classes, including engagements which take place outside of regular school hours.
4. Students must maintain an exemplary attitude, effort, work ethic, and interest in the Fine Arts.

5. Students will maintain positive behaviour in accordance with the MHCBE Student Code of Conduct. This includes the responsibility of being an ambassador of St. Mary's School.
6. Students must maintain a level of good academic standing or show evidence of academic accountability and improvement.
7. Parents and students must agree to support and participate in the activities of the Fine Arts Parent Council. This includes the donation of a piece of student artwork, selected by a teacher-student conference, to the annual Fine Arts Wine Gala .

Student performance in the Fine Arts program will be reviewed at the end of each reporting period, including the end of the academic year. Students found to be struggling with any of the above criteria may be required to meet with Fine Arts faculty, meet with administration, put on a period of probation, and/or be removed from the program. This agreement is subject to the discretion of the Fine Arts Faculty and administration. Administrators reserve the right to have the final say in student programming.

Selection Process

In the event that the number of students enrolling in a particular grade exceeds the capacity of the program, students in good standing (see Fine Arts Program Standards) will be selected in the following order:

1. Current Grade 7 & 8 St. Mary's School Fine Arts Academy students
2. Current Grade 6 students registered at and attending a Medicine Hat Catholic school
3. Current Grade 7 & 8 non-academy St. Mary's School students
4. Current Grade 7 & 8 Notre Dame students
5. New Catholic students to Medicine Hat Catholic once accepted into the division
6. All other new students to Medicine Hat Catholic once accepted into the division

Once a class has reached capacity, all remaining students will be placed on a waiting list. In order to maintain a spot on the waiting list, students must be registered at St. Mary's as a non-academy student. As spots become available, students will be transferred into the Academy Program.

Registration opens on February 1. All selection process criteria (see above) remain in force during open registration. On March 1, any further registrations - including those from existing Fine Arts students - will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis. Administrators reserve the right to have the final say in student programming. Parents will be notified by email regarding acceptance into the Fine Arts Academy program each spring.

Class Load

Core Subjects: Religion, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science

Flex: Physical Education, Health, Computers, additional option experiences

Fine Arts Academy Program: Art, Band, Choral, Dance, Drama

Fee Schedule

The Fine Arts Academy is a program of choice, therefore a fee will be charged to be in the program. All fee payments and arrangements are processed through [School Cash Online](#). Payments can be lump-sum or scheduled up to 10 monthly payments. More information regarding payment plans will be provided at the beginning of the school year.

Academy Fee	\$355
Band Instrument Rental Fee	\$90
Total	\$445

Should unforeseen circumstances arise and schools experience a temporary closure, scheduled payments will not be stopped. Refunds (if applicable) will be calculated depending on the length of closure, the academy expenses and revenue collected. Refunds would only be issued at the end of the school year after all factors have been taken into account and have been approved by MHCBE Senior Administration.

Fine Arts Academy Class Load - Grades 7/8/9

Core Subjects: Religion, Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science

Flex: Physical Education, Health, Computers, additional options

Fine Arts Academy Program: Art, Band, Choral, Dance, Drama

Alternative Programming

St. Mary's School offers customizable academic programs for students with diverse learning needs that are not easily addressed by partaking in a traditional school day. Alternative programs are tailored to the needs of each individual student and are designed in consultation with the student, parents, administrators, teachers, and counselling staff. Programs can be in-person, online, or hybrid (in-person and online), can be self-directed and/or teacher-led, and can include any number of course offerings. Other outreach offerings can be arranged depending on student needs. All courses are taught by a certified teacher and all other St. Mary's staff (administrators, librarian, counsellors, etc.) are available to students with an Alternative Program.

All programs require a certain degree of in-person attendance as agreed upon by the student, staff, and administration. All students must continuously abide by the Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education Student Code of Conduct ([Code of Conduct](#)). Parents/guardians are expected to work in partnership with St. Mary's School to supervise their child when they are at home. Additionally, parents/guardians must ensure that their child has an appropriate work area, supplies, and schedule.

Registrations are accepted on a case-by-case basis after meeting with the Alternative Programming staff and school administration. School administration will make the final decision on programming. Please contact the school if you are interested.

Online Learning

St. Mary's School offers an online learning program offered by a qualified teacher. Your teacher will use a combination of Google Classroom and Google Meets to deliver your courses. When asked, your teacher will require you to attend classes on Google Meets and attendance will be taken. Synchronous online classes include engaging with the teacher in activities and discussions and may include group work. Other times your teacher may ask you to find assignments on Google Classroom and complete them on an asynchronous basis. Furthermore, you will be required to attend periodic in-person meetings as requested by your teacher.

Student Support Services

Lockers and Locks

All students will be assigned a locker and a school issued lock. Only the school issued lock may be used. Locker combinations should not be shared with other students. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items. ****The locker is the property of the school and can be opened at any time by school administration.** See also: [Student Search](#)

School Web Page

www.stmarymh.ca

Our website hosts important information about our school. Some highlights include:

What's New – Find out information about the most recent happenings in our school community including academic/athletic/fine arts updates, important announcements and student recognition

Quick Links– find commonly used educational sites, access your email, look up information in the student handbook, or find sports team schedules. Also included are the links to the school Facebook and Twitter accounts. Information is changed regularly so check back often.

School Calendar – check out what's happening by accessing the school calendar. This calendar is available for download & will automatically update when changes are made.

Newsletter Signup – please subscribe to our school newsletter & weekly communications

PowerSchool– Parents and students are encouraged to track student marks, assignments, attendance, etc. throughout the school year using the PowerSchool program. The link is located on the home page as well. If you require assistance logging in please contact the school.

Student Services

Student services are available to all students for the purpose of facilitating learning that results in intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual and mental well being. The following services are available:

1. Academic Advising, Career Planning, Social & Emotional Support - School Counsellor
2. Social, Emotional & Skill Building Support – HUB Staff
3. Mental Health & Addictions – Family Support Liaison Worker - by referral only
4. Mental Health Prevention & Promotion—School Wellness Facilitator
5. Learning Support: accommodations, individual programming - Learning Services Teacher

If you require assistance of any type, please contact the school.

School Resource Officer

A City of Medicine Hat Police Officer is on site and available to assist in classes, provide confidential consultation to students and staff, and to serve as a liaison between local police service, school, and community.

Life Framework, Diversity Groups, LGBTQ+ Support

([AP 160](#); [CCSSA's LIFE Framework](#))

Medicine Hat Catholic Schools are committed to using the LIFE Framework as a guideline for the creation and operation of student groups that are comprehensive in their approach to inclusion and open to the exploration, in a Catholic context, of a variety of issues including bullying, sexual harassment, sexual orientation, gender identity, discrimination, justice, and respectful relationships and language (such as gay-straight alliance, queer-straight alliance, etc.). The LIFE Framework is the result of a provincial collaboration of Catholic school jurisdictions. St. Mary's may be organising LIFE Framework/Diversity groups throughout the year. We will keep the school community informed through the weekly Monday Morning Memo and monthly School Newsletter.

St. Mary's School approaches all students with love, acceptance, and respect regardless of who they are and where they come from. If any student needs assistance with any issue, including, but not limited to, gender or sexual identity, they should ask any teacher or counsellor. Any accommodation that is requested, including name changes, requires parental support.

Student Activities

School Activities

All social activities are arranged by the St. Mary's School Leadership group with the approval of the Principal or Vice Principal. All students in good standing are welcome to attend and/or support all social functions. Examples of



student activities during the year include Liturgies, Spirit Week, Motivational presentations, Pep Rallies, Dances, Drama Productions, Awards and a Year End Farewell SlideShow Assembly.

Extracurricular Activities: Athletics/Musical and Clubs

There are many opportunities available for students at St. Mary's to get involved in the school and be a part of the programs offered. We trust that students of St. Mary's will maintain a place of distinction for the school in all types of interschool activities. We are proud of our students' achievements.

Sports include: Football, Volleyball, Basketball, Golf, Badminton, Track and Field, Soccer, and Cross-Country. Fees determined by each coach will be charged to players on the team early in the season.

St. Mary's is also proud to present an annual drama production and all students are encouraged to audition regardless of program stream in school.

Clubs/Groups include: Chess, Leadership, Drama/Improv, and other clubs based on demand

Supervision and Lunch

[\(AP 310\)](#)

Lunch is in two halves. During the first half of lunch all students eat in their homerooms. During the second half of lunch, students will leave their homerooms and be assigned a general area to be in during their break. Areas will include, but are not limited to, outside, gym, library, and hallways.

[Supervision Schedule and Lunch Areas 2022-2023](#)

Student Code of Conduct

Students are expected to meet the requirements of the School Act (Section 12) which states a student shall conduct himself or herself so as to reasonably comply with the following code of conduct:

1. Be diligent in pursuing the student's studies
2. Attend school regularly and punctually
3. Cooperate fully with everyone authorised by the board to provide education programs and other services
4. Comply with the rules of the school
5. Account to the student's teachers for the student's conduct
6. Respect the rights of others
7. Ensure that the student's conduct contributes to a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging

8. Refrain from, report and not tolerate bullying or bullying behaviour directed toward others in the school, whether or not it occurs within the school building, during the school day or by electronic means
9. Positively contribute to the student's school and community

For a more detailed description of student conduct, including the rights and responsibilities of parents and the school board, please refer to [AP 351 - Student Conduct](#) and [AP 351 Appendix A - Student Code of Conduct](#).

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

([AP 350](#))

Every student meeting the requirements set out in the School Act is entitled to an educational program and the Division is required to make all reasonable efforts to ensure that a student attends school. In addition, students enrolled in our Catholic schools have the right to an education based on the freedom to teach and live our Catholic faith. Rights and responsibilities are intertwined.

1. Students have the right to qualified and competent teachers.
2. Students are responsible for what they choose to do; therefore, students must be willing to accept responsibility for their actions.
3. Students have the right to be treated with respect and compassion in our schools; students have the responsibility to treat others with respect and compassion.
4. Students have the right to be treated fairly and the responsibility to treat others fairly.
5. Students have the right to a safe environment and the responsibility to keep our schools safe for others.
6. Students have the right to a peaceful school, free of weapons, fighting and harassment and the responsibility to keep our schools peaceful.
7. Students have the responsibility to be clean and tidy in person and clothes.
8. All students have the responsibility to respect the rights of other students to a successful Catholic education.

School Policies

School Discipline Policy

([AP 357](#))

The goal of discipline is to change negative behaviour to positive behaviour, rather than to punish students. Through effective communication between the school and home environment we will work towards eliminating negative behaviours. If the behaviour does not change, additional consequences may be given. If the student displays repeated unacceptable behaviour or if a student's behaviour is dangerous to himself/herself or to other people; the student may be suspended and/or a recommendation will be made to the Board of Education for alternative programming or expulsion.

Parent Inquiries

Parents who wish to discuss a matter of student discipline or concerns should first contact the student's teacher. Further inquiries or complaints should then be addressed to the school Principal. If the matter cannot be resolved by the Principal, the parent may contact the Superintendent or through him, the Board of Trustees. Also see: [Appeals](#)

Academic Improvement Policy

One of our goals at St. Mary's School is for students to learn as many outcomes as possible. To assist in achieving this goal and to allow for the professional judgement of the teachers in respect to student assessment in the various disciplines, each teacher has established their own Academic Improvement Policy that will include the following:

- All teachers will offer an Academic Improvement Policy that is consistent within each course
- Type of assessment(s) that the Academic Improvement Policy will be used on
- Conditions for students to earn their chance to use the Academic Improvement Policy that are directly related to the student learning more outcomes
- Reasonable timelines for students to use the Academic Improvement Policy
- What impact will this Academic Improvement Policy have on their grade
- Each Academic Improvement Policy will be communicated to students on their class outline for each course at the beginning of the semester

Academic Honesty Policy (Plagiarism)

Student honesty and integrity are highly valued at St. Mary's School. Students are expected to conduct themselves with maturity and honesty in their academic work.

Student Conduct and Discipline

Unsatisfactory behaviour and academic dishonesty include such things as plagiarism, lying, cheating by copying or bringing written or electronic answers into the examination setting, or stealing examinations and altering grades, which will result in disciplinary action.

Responsibility of the Student

You are obligated to refrain from all forms of intellectual dishonesty. Each of the following actions constitutes intellectual dishonesty. However, these actions do not necessarily exhaust the forms which intellectual dishonesty may take:

1. Copying the work of another person without giving credit to the author and submitting the work as one's own ideas (plagiarism).
2. Using unauthorised materials or communicating information without authorization in a test or examination. This would include such items as i-pods, mp3 players, phones, un-cleared calculators or unauthorised calculators, cheat sheets, etc.
3. Altering marks on an assignment, tests, examination, or quizzes.
4. Helping, attempting to help, or receiving help from another person to commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes allowing students to copy all or any part of assignments, tests, examinations, and/or quizzes.

Consequences of Intellectual Dishonesty

In the first offence, the consequence for a breach of the intellectual honesty policy by the student shall include the following:

1. The consequence will result in a mark of zero on the grade of the assignment, quiz, or examination.
2. The student will be given a 1 day in-school suspension in which they will be required to re-write the assignment, quiz, or examination so that the teacher will know what the student has learned in regards to that outcome. They will also be required to complete all in-school suspension requirements.
3. The student will phone their parent/guardian and explain the details of this breach.

In the second and future offences, the consequence for a second and future breaches of the intellectual honesty policy by the student shall include the following:

1. All of the above will occur however the suspension will be increased to 3 days.
2. A parent/student and Administrator meeting shall be set up by the Administration to discuss details of the incident and how to avoid future breaches of this policy.
3. The combined marks of zero will serve as a natural consequence which will lower the student's overall grade.

Dress Policy

[\(AP 331\)](#)

Students' appearance and dress is to reflect a standard of modesty and courtesy that is appropriate and fitting for an educational environment of the school and for making a smooth transition to the workplace. Extremes of style not appropriate for school include, but are not limited to, the following: exposed under-garments, open side shirts, "see-through" attire, clothing that shows buttocks, obvious cleavage, and/or waist/midriff, and clothing with symbols, insignias, and printed messages that are inconsistent with the District Mission Statement. Facial and body ornaments (e.g. protruding spiked jewellery) that may endanger safety are unacceptable. **Students may not wear hats or headwear including hoods and bandanas in the school.** All dress and attire should reflect Catholic values.

Staff and students are not required to wear masks at this time, but we will continue to offer a supportive environment for anyone who chooses to wear a mask at school.

The Principal or the Vice Principal shall make the final decision on the acceptability of any style of dress. All violations will be dealt with on an individual basis. Students in violation of the dress code may be required to cover up or change their clothing, or may be sent home to do so. If parents come in with proper clothing, the student will remain in the office until the parents arrive and the change in clothing has occurred. Subsequent violations may result in a suspension.

Technology Policy

[\(AP 140 Appendix II\)](#)

Computers are located in classrooms and the library. All students are expected to become competent with the use of varied computer programs.

1. St. Mary's provides internet access primarily for purposes of research.
2. Students are responsible for appropriate behaviour on the internet. General school rules for behaviour and communications apply.
3. The network administrator may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not expect that files will be private.
4. No storage devices are allowed without permission of the supervising teacher.
5. **Students are required to log on using their own username and password only.**
6. Students are not permitted to use or access the teacher workstation in their classroom without the direct permission and supervision of their teacher.
7. Students should not, under any circumstances, share their login information with any other individual.

If these rules or guidelines are violated, the teacher or administrator may remove a student's computer privileges for a designated time period.

Personal Electronic Devices

For the purposes of this document, a personal electronic device is considered to be any device capable of digital or analog communication and includes, but is not limited to: cell phones, iPods, iPads, laptops, Chromebooks, smart watches, headphones, earbuds, etc.

Students are allowed to use electronic devices during non-instructional times throughout the day. This includes breaks between classes and lunch break.

Students are responsible for their own personal electronic devices. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken phones or other electronic devices. There is an inherent risk to bringing personal electronic devices to school.

Cell Phone use is **NOT PERMITTED** in any change room or washroom including off campus facilities.

Photographing or video recording staff or students is only allowed with the permission of the subject. Unauthorised photographing or recording is prohibited.

During instructional times (class time) students are to leave their electronic communication devices in their bag or turn them into the teacher when entering the classroom. If an electronic communication device is used during class time or found on the student **without teacher permission**, this will be considered a violation of this policy.

First violation of this policy will result in a one day in-school suspension. Any further violation will result in an increase in suspension time and a parent/student/administration meeting.

Video Surveillance

(AP 181)

St. Mary's School utilises video cameras for safety and monitoring purposes.

School Telephone

The school telephone is for business use only. Students and parents are encouraged to discuss arrangements for school pick-up, before and after school programs, appointments, and after school activities before coming to school each day. Students will be given permission to use the telephone located outside of the office in cases of emergency only. Students should make requests to their classroom teacher if they need to use the classroom telephone. Permission will be granted at the discretion of the teacher and office staff.

Bicycles / Skateboards / Scooters / In-Line Skates

Bicycles are to be parked and locked in the bike rack area at the back of the school. Arrival and departure of scooters should be down 12th Street SW. Scooters are not permitted in the bus zone (clearly signed on 2nd Ave. SW). **No bicycle/scooter riding is permitted on the school grounds or sidewalks. It is mandatory by LAW that all students wear a helmet and proper safety equipment.** Helmets may be stored in homerooms, or the office if not **locked** inside the scooter. Scooter parking is located on 2nd. Ave, across the street from the school. Any Skateboards or In-Line Skates should be left at the office. See administration for more details.

Smoking, Vaping, and Tobacco

(AP 165)

Students are not allowed to possess, chew, or smoke tobacco or tobacco-related products or paraphernalia anywhere on campus or during off-campus classes.

***Students refusing to surrender tobacco products when asked will receive an automatic suspension.**

***Vaporizers are prohibited on campus and during off-campus classes.**

First Offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Parent or guardian notified● Student will be given a 3 day suspension● Student will be referred to School Liaison Counsellor who will make recommendations● Tobacco and vaping paraphernalia will be confiscated● Tobacco will be referred to the School Resource Officer
Second Offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Tobacco product will be confiscated● Violation will be referred to the School Resource Officer with recommendation a ticket be issued● Student will be given a 5 day suspension

Third Offence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tobacco product will be confiscated ● Violation will be referred to the School Resource Officer ● Student will be given a 5 day suspension and recommended for alternate programming.
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Alcohol/Drug Policy

The use of drugs is strictly prohibited. In all cases:

- Parent or guardian will be notified
- Paraphernalia will be confiscated
- Student will be referred to School Liaison Counsellor who will make recommendations
- The case will be referred to the School Resource Officer

In possession of drug paraphernalia (pipe, paper, knife, other)	5 day suspension
In possession of drugs/alcohol (any amount)	5 day suspension
In possession of drugs/alcohol (2nd offence to alcohol/drug policy)	5 day suspension with recommendation for alternate programming
Smell of drugs/alcohol	Contact parents, student goes home, if they return they must contact an administrator before going to class.
Smell of drugs/alcohol (2 nd offence)	3-day suspension
Smell of drugs/alcohol (3 rd offence)	5-day suspension with recommendation for alternate programming.
Is under the influence of drugs/alcohol	3-day suspension
Is under the influence of drugs/alcohol (2nd offence)	5-day suspension
Is under the influence of drugs/alcohol (3rd offence)	Placed on an alternate program in partnership with Addictions Counselling until the counsellor gives the confirmation that the drug problem is resolved.

Evidence of trafficking drugs	5-day suspension with recommendation for an alternate program off school property.
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Violence, Weapons and Criminal Offences

([AP 356](#))

Students who bring weapons to school or who brandish an object that is intended to cause bodily harm, will be recommended for suspension or expulsion. A weapon is anything used, intended for use, or has the potential to be used in causing injury or death to persons, whether designed for that purpose or not, or anything used or intended for use for the purpose of threatening or intimidating any person.

Suicide Prevention

([Pathways to Hope: Best Practices in Suicide Prevention in Alberta Schools](#))

St. Mary's school have a network of staff trained in safeTALK and Applied Suicide Prevention Skills Training (ASIST). Staff will not promise to keep information about suicide risks or attempts secret as safety overrides confidentiality.

Student Search

([AP 354](#))

The St. Mary's Administrative Team takes its responsibility to provide all students with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours. Student property and school property, including school lockers, may be subject to searches as determined by St. Mary's Administration.

Students and Parents should understand that police and police dogs may be used and that there should be no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to locker use.

Damage to Property

([AP 358](#))

Students will be held responsible for their actions in regard to destruction or damage to school property whether occurring through vandalism or lack of due care and attention. If a student is found responsible for damage to school property, the cost of repairing or replacing the damaged property will be charged to the student through his/her parents.

Attendance Policy

School Attendance

Regular attendance directly relates to student success in school. It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to ensure that children arrive on time to school. **Parents must contact the school when their child is absent or late at 403-527-7616.** When calls have not been received after morning and afternoon attendance, confirmation calls to home or place of work will be made to ensure the student who is absent is safe and accounted for. Please also refer to the Late and Attendance Policy outlined in this handbook.

Because regular attendance and punctuality are important factors in achieving excellence in the teaching/learning process within a classroom, the School Act states that students are to miss school only if it is an **unavoidable circumstance or if they are ill**. The following are actions taken by the school to promote regular attendance.

Responsibilities

1. **Students** have the primary responsibility for attendance in all classes and parents have the secondary responsibility for attendance of their child in all classes.
2. **Teachers** are responsible to take attendance every period each day.
3. **Parents** are responsible for informing school personnel of all absences. Phone the school at 403-527-7616 to excuse your child.
4. **Students** are responsible to catch up on missed material if their absences are unavoidable or school generated. (Field trips, sports, etc.)

Student Absences during the School Year

Parents/guardians sometimes choose to take students out of school for extended periods such as vacations, visits to relatives, assistance to the family and so on. In such situations, **the Alberta School Act states these as “Non-Excusable Reasons.”** Regular class attendance is important for achievement. The student or parent should let school administration and the various subject teachers know well before planned absences. Teachers **may** give guidance and assignments that will reduce the negative effects of the absence. **Please note that in virtually all situations, significant absences will have a detrimental effect on achievement!**

Consequences of Excessive Absences

On an ongoing basis, and as concerns about attendance arise, the following actions may be taken:

- 1) The student’s teacher will contact home regarding continual absences to offer support and assistance.
- 2) The school counsellor may reach out to families to offer support and assistance.
- 3) School Administration may request a meeting with the student and the parent(s) or guardian(s).
- 4) An attendance intervention plan will be developed.
- 5) Referral to the Division Attendance Officer

Notification of Excessive Absences

Parents/guardians will be notified of excessive absences at the end of each month and/or reporting period (November and March). Notifications will be sent if students’ absences have reached 10%, 15%, 20%, or greater. Excessive absence notifications will be distributed by email.

Late Policy

Punctuality is an important expectation of student behaviour, according to the School Act. Punctual students show respect for the learning of others by not disrupting a class in session.

As well, instruction is crucial for the direction/expectation of assignments, which are usually given at the start of a period. This policy attempts to provide a balance between clear consequences for numerous lates with a “three chances” so that punctuality becomes a habit for students. We also recognize that sometimes being late is unavoidable. **Students who arrive late to school must sign in at the front office.**

Medicine Hat Catholic Board of Education has established a standardized system for reporting student absences across the division. The attendance codes are utilized for reporting to Alberta Education and/or Alberta Health. If your child is absent or tardy, you will notice one of the following explanations for their absence:

- (P) Present
- (A) Absent - These are any absences that are not explained in the rest of the categories or the parent/guardian does not call in
- (I) Illness/Injury
- (E) Explained - Parent/Guardian has called in with a reason (Parental, Bereavement, Holidays etc)
- (X) Late - Excused
- (L) Late - Unexcused
- (Y) Left Early - Excused
- (Z) Left - Early Unexcused
- (M) Medical/Appointment (these would include dental/eye, etc)
- (F) School Function (field trip, sports event, etc)
- (S) Suspension - In
- (T) Suspension - Out
- (N) Transportation/Weather

Anti-Bullying Policy

Definition of Bullying

Our Division views bullying as unchristian behaviour, and it will not be tolerated. Alberta Education defines bullying as an act which:

1. Repeatedly hurts another individual either-
 - a. **Physical Bullying** - (such as pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting, or any other use of violence, taking items from, forcing to do something, unwillingly), etc.
 - b. **Verbal Bullying** - (such as teasing, name-calling, sarcasm, threatening, spreading rumours), etc.
 - c. **Social Bullying** – mobbing, scapegoating, excluding others from a group, humiliating others, damaging someone’s social reputation, gestures, or graffiti intended to put others down.
 - d. **Cyber Bullying** - through the use of technology (such as cyber bullying - using technology to hurt others through any communication device such as e-mail, cell phone, camera, chat rooms, text messaging, or websites), etc.

2. Is deliberate and sustained
3. Is intended to isolate, hurt, or humiliate another individual
4. Is unprovoked.

Bullying Protocol

The goal of St. Mary’s Catholic School's anti-bullying policy is to ensure that all students experience a safe, Christian environment that is conducive to learning. The following steps will be taken when dealing with bullying incidents:

1. Whenever possible, any incidents which may constitute bullying should be reported immediately to the teacher in charge at the time of the incident. The teacher in charge at the time of the incident will immediately deal with those involved in the incident.
2. In some cases, students may choose to report the incident to a different adult in the building, such as their homeroom teacher, a secretary, or the principal. If so students are encouraged to report as soon as possible following the incident(s).
3. The principal or teacher in charge should be made aware of any bullying incidents. Students engaging in bullying behaviour will be disciplined according to the school discipline policy. Depending on severity and length of incident, parents may be notified.
4. If the bullying does not cease after the student has been disciplined, parents will be notified and other action will be taken according to the school discipline policy.
5. Whenever possible, stand up for the student being bullied, and refrain from joining in bullying behaviour.

If you feel your child is being bullied, please talk to a teacher, school counsellor or administrator right away. Children often do not know they are bullying until they have been notified by an adult.

Consequences of Bullying

This is a five step process which is meant to be a guideline for school officials, parents and students. Depending on each individual circumstance, these guidelines may be altered by the school administration - students may be placed at any step during the process. Typically students may serve suspensions either in school, or out of school again depending upon the circumstance. As with all school matters, parents can appeal school actions to the principal.

Steps	Sanctions	Conditions for Reinstatement
Step 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion with administrator regarding inappropriate behaviour ● Notification to student of this policy and level that the student has been placed ● Parent may be notified depending on circumstances 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student must write a essay explaining why bullying or the act is unacceptable ● The student will write a letter of apology/ face to face apology to the victim

Step 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 day in school suspension served in the HUB ● Notification to student and parents/guardians of this policy and level that the student has been placed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The student must meet with school administration ● The student will write a essay of apology/ face to face apology to the victim ● The student must meet with the HUB staff /school counselor ● Administration will implement a no contact order between the bully and victim.
Step 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 day in school suspension served in the HUB ● Notification to student and parents/guardians of this policy and level that the student has been placed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The student and parents/guardians must meet with the school administration ● The student will write a essay of apology / face to face apology to the victim ● The student must meet with HUB staff/school counselor and a referral to mental health may be warranted. ● Administration will implement a no contact order between the bully and victim. ● The student must meet with the school resource officer (a bullying ticket may be issued depending on circumstance)
Step 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 - 5 day out of school suspension ● Notification to student and parents/guardians of this policy and level that the student has been placed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The student and parents/guardians must meet with the school administration ● Community service plan will be implemented ● The student must meet with HUB staff/school counselor and a referral to mental health may be warranted. ● Administration will implement a no contact order between the bully and victim. ● The student must meet with the school resource officer (a bullying

		ticket may be issued depending on circumstance)
Step 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Withdrawal from classes ● Alternative placement ● Possible recommendation for expulsion 	

Appeals

([AP 390](#))

Students and parents have the right to appeal school-based decisions with the principal. An appeal to the principal shall be initiated only after all attempts at resolving the problem at the school have proven unsuccessful.