

Welcome to our new 2020-21 St. Mary's School Families!

Below you'll find some answers to the most frequently asked questions and general information that you might find helpful as your family begins your educational journey with us. Please don't hesitate to stop in or call the school or principal's office if you have other questions or concerns!

What time does school start and end?

For the past several years, the "warning" bell rings at 8:05 with the second bell ringing at 8:10. This is when all students must be in their classroom or are marked tardy. The end of the day bell is rung at 2:55. This schedule is set by the public school's bus schedule, but will likely remain unchanged for the 2020-2021 school year.

When are school doors opened in the morning?

Officially, the classroom doors open at 7:45 and we encourage families not to drop their students before this time. However, a few families require an earlier drop off, so students are allowed to arrive as early as 7:30 and go to the library where they remain until classrooms are opened. Only families who must use this option should do so, since there is not room for very many students in the library.

When are school doors closed at the end of the day?

Buses currently load at 3:05 (which should remain unchanged for 2020-21). Students should be picked up no later than 3:15. Any students remaining in the building after this time will be sent to After School Care (ASC) in the library or Family Center and fees charged to the family's ASC account. (Fees will be set in September based on how many families plan to use ASC).

What are the hours for After School Care?

ASC is a program that families sign up for at the beginning of the school year and is available for K-6 students. It is available from 3:15 to 5:15, Monday through Friday. However, this service is based on demand. Last year, St. Mary's eliminated Monday ASC because it was poorly attended and we lost money on those days. It is our hope that we will again offer ASC Monday through Friday in the 2020-2021 school year.

How does Rainbow Rider work?

Many parents use Rainbow Rider for transportation. This is worked out between parents and Rainbow Rider. St. Mary's is not involved in making arrangements. Their number is 1-800-450-7770 or 320-283-5061. If your pre-school or Kindergarten child is arriving or leaving by Rainbow Rider, the

pre-school and Kindergarten teachers and driver are very vigilant about watching everyone enter and exit both school and bus.

How does drop off and pick up work? Some parents of younger children come into the school building in the morning with their child, walking them to their classroom door, and also come into the building a few minutes before dismissal and wait in or near the stairwells on the north or south, or right outside their child's classroom. As the school year progresses, this isn't always needed, and is up to the discretion of the family. (See Pre-school information for their procedure). For older students, parents generally remain in their cars on the north or south side of the school as they drop off or pick up children. Buses load and unload on the east side of the school. Only persons listed on enrollment forms by the parent are allowed to pick up students from school.

How do I communicate changes in afternoon departure plans?

The preferred method of communicating changes in end of the day departures is sending a note to the school office detailing the change where it is stamped by the school secretary and delivered to your child's teacher. However, we know that occasionally, changes happen during the day that weren't anticipated. These changes must be communicated by 2:30 to the school secretary, otherwise we risk not getting the message to teachers in time. The school office gets hectic between 2:30 and the end of the school day, so please be considerate and call as early in the day as possible.

How should I report a planned or last-minute absence?

It is critically important that you contact the school within a half hour ahead of your child's normal attendance time, or earlier. When your child is absent and we haven't heard from you, we are required to contact you and we will keep trying because we are responsible for determining the whereabouts of your child. It can be necessary to inform the police if we have not been able to reach you or your child.

Pre-School Information

Who may ride the bus?

Three-year olds are not allowed to ride the bus, even with an older sibling. Four-year olds may ride the bus if they are with an older sibling (or sometimes a responsible neighbor or bus buddy) who attends St. Mary's School. Kindergarten through 6th graders are allowed to ride the bus.

Signing in and out: Pre-school students must be signed in and signed out at the Pre-School door at the beginning and end of every class time. Only persons on the approved list may sign them out. People can be added or taken off the list by contacting the office.

Snacks: Snacks and milk are provided every day, morning and afternoon.

Communications: Important communications from Mrs. Berscheit are sent home to the parents in the classroom folders. In addition, school-wide information is communicated through a variety of methods: Weekly Newsletters, Schoolspeak, emails and phone text messages.

Religious Education: All Pre-school sections attend a weekly session in our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium, located in the Family Center.

Outdoor Playtime: Mrs. Berscheit takes children outside for a brief recess time every day, weather permitting. Appropriate outdoor clothing is required.

Kindergarten Information

How does lunch time work for my Kindergartener? How do I set up an account with the public school?

If your child attended pre-school at St. Mary's, they already have an account number. If not, they will be assigned one before the school year begins once you're enrolled. You will need to contact Karen Holt at LPGE schools before the first day of school to get information on setting up your Skyward meal account and funding it if you are planning on LPGE providing meals and/or milk to your child or you may go onto the LPGE website, go onto the Online store/shop/Food Service to check out your lunch account.

Who may ride the bus?

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Snacks: Snacks and milk are provided every day in the morning.

Communications: Important communications from Mrs. Hebert are sent home to parents in the classroom folders. Family folders are sent home on Wednesdays in both English and Spanish. In addition, school-wide information is communicated through a variety of methods: Weekly Newsletters, Schoolspeak, emails and phone text messages.

Religious Education: All kindergarteners attend a weekly session in our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Atrium, located in the Family Center. Students also attend weekly Mass every Wednesday.