

# St. Mary's School Admissions Policy

The primary purpose of the Catholic school within the Diocese of New Ulm is the education of young people in order to assist them in their academic, personal, and spiritual growth—"to educate the whole person: mind, body, and soul."<sup>1</sup> As a Catholic school, emphasis is first and foremost on the teaching and practice of the Catholic faith so children and young people can "experience learning and living fully integrated in the light of faith."<sup>2</sup> Parents and guardians who enroll their children also understand that the school will remain faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church and steadfast in proclaiming them. (<sup>1</sup> USCCB, National Directory for Catechesis, (Washington, D.C.: USCCB, 2005), p 262; <sup>2</sup> Ibid)

The administration of the school recognizes that our students come from a variety of family backgrounds, some of which may not fully conform to the moral teachings of the Catholic Church. The personal family background of a student does not constitute an absolute obstacle to enrollment in the school. Nor does acceptance of any child for enrollment in the school condone or imply approval of any parental living situation which may be contrary to Church teachings.

**Students Not of the Catholic Faith:** The presence of students who do not share the Catholic faith provides a wonderful diversity to the school; however, this diversity shall not alter the primacy of Catholic religious formation as an integral component of the educational program in the school. As such:

- All students are expected to participate in the religious formation and education programs of the school.
- All students must participate in liturgies, retreats, other religious functions, and religion classes for credit.
- Catholic Church tenets state that students not of the Catholic faith may not receive the sacraments of the Church; therefore, these students are exempt from formal co-curricular or extra-curricular sacramental preparation programs but not from the catechesis held during the school day.
- Students are expected, for testing and discussion purposes, to be knowledgeable of the Catholic Church's positions on scripture, revelation, and moral practices. While Catholic teaching respects the various faith traditions of the students attending the Catholic school, parents must be aware that it is the Catholic position that will be taught.

**Non-Discrimination Clause:** Catholic schools, administered under the authority of the Catholic Diocese of New Ulm, comply with those constitutional and statutory provisions, as may be specifically applicable to the schools, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, age, disability (see following paragraph), national or ethnic origin or citizenship in the administration of their educational, admissions, financial aid, athletic, and other school administered student programs.

Students shall not be denied admission because of a disability unless this disability seriously impairs the student's ability to successfully complete the school's academic program within the reasonable accommodations that may be provided for the disabled child. Parents are to fully disclose the nature and known extent of any physical, emotional, environmental, or learning disabilities at the time of registration.

This policy does not conflict with the priority given to Catholics for admission as students. Nor does it preclude the ability of the school to undertake and/or enforce appropriate actions with respect to students who advocate on school property or at school functions any practices or doctrines which are inconsistent with the religious tenets of the Catholic faith.

**Parental Role:** The Catholic Church recognizes and the Catholic school respects the parents as the primary and principal educators of their children. For a Catholic parent, the promise at baptism to raise their children as Catholic supports these premises and the Catholic school thereby exists to assist parents in the Christian formation of their children—assisting in what is to already be happening in the home. With the school being a continuation of a child's primary education, all parents enrolling their children in the school are expected to support the school's mission and commitment to Christian principles.

Parents are expected to annually read the St. Mary's Elementary Student/Parent Handbook and sign the last page of as acceptance of the school's policies as set forth within the handbook.

While present on the school campus be it for academic related activities or extra-curricular events, every adult has the responsibility of appropriate conduct in order to support the school's mission and provide positive role models to our students. A coherent witness to Catholic moral teaching is expected at the school and during any school-related activities.

**Admission Documents:** The following documents are required for each student's permanent records at the time of registration: immunization record listing the dates of all shots in compliance with those required by state law, baptismal certificate (Catholic and non-Catholic students), custody agreement (if applicable).

**Admission/Enrollment Decisions:** A parent retains the right to withdraw a student at any time just as the school administration (principal and/or pastor) reserves the right to accept or deny admission of a student within the parameters of the school policies. The school administration hopes that all decisions may be made through amicable discussion. If needed, a grievance procedure to assist with any discussion is also a part of this handbook.