

# Elementary Handbook

## 2024 - 2025

**St. Charles Preschool and Primary School &  
Afterschool Program**  
(Little Macks 3K - Grade 2)  
**Holy Ghost Elementary School**  
(Grades 3 - 5)



**MCDONELL AREA  
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**  
Est. 1882

*Education for Life*

**St. Charles Borromeo Primary School, Holy Ghost Elementary School & Little Macks Preschool are Catholic Schools in the Diocese of LaCrosse. As Catholic Schools we will teach and advocate our Catholic Faith. All students are welcome in our schools and all parents and legal guardians must understand that Catholic Doctrine will be taught. The passing on of our Catholic Faith is our number one priority.**

**Accredited by Wisconsin Religious and Independent Schools Association (WRISA)**

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***McDonell Area Catholic Schools (MACS) reserves the right to make corrections and/or changes to this handbook as needed. Any corrections or changes will be posted and effective immediately in our 2023-24 Family Handbook, which can be found on our Website under both parent and student quick links.***

# GENERAL INFORMATION

## Our Mission

McDonnell Area Catholic Schools are committed to the formation of community, academic excellence and the spiritual and physical well-being of each student in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

## Our Vision

We are the school of choice for an excellent Catholic faith based education within the Chippewa Falls area. We welcome all families to be a part of our school community no matter their faith or financial means. In partnership with our parents, we form the whole child in support of our values and mission.

Our vision of the whole child consists of a lifelong learner, who upon graduation, is academically prepared for postsecondary education and career, grounded in relationship with Jesus Christ, balanced physically and emotionally, and actively engages as servant leaders in family, parish, and civic communities.

## Our Core Values

### **FAITH**

*“Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”  
(John 17:3)*

- Strive to know and love God with all my heart, mind, soul and strength
- Maintain a living personal relationship with Christ through prayer and the Sacraments
- Seek to discern the Father’s will for me, especially in terms of my vocation in life
- Receive spiritual nourishment by regular participation in the holy Eucharist
- Listen to God’s Word present in creation, Scriptures, and the living Tradition of the Church
- Integrate my Catholic Faith into all my relationships and activities

### **HONOR**

*“My Father will honor the one who serves me.” (John 12:26)*

- Be guided in all things by Christ, the Way, the truth and the Life
- Practice the virtue of justice in my relationship with others.
- Always be trusted to keep my promises
- Avoid doing things that make me feel ashamed
- Demonstrate manners in everyday actions
- Know there may be disagreements but resolve them respectfully
- Use my freedom to do what is good, and beautiful

### **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**

*“Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” (Philippians 4:8)*

- Seek the truth in all things
- Practice the virtue of fortitude in pursuing what is good
- Strive to surpass good and attain excellence
- Have high expectations and standards
- Make school work personal and meaningful
- Set vigorous goals and challenges and develop support to meet them

## HEALTHY LIVING

*“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You are not your own.” (Corinthians 6:19)*

- Practice the virtues of temperance and chastity.
- Eat well
- Exercise regularly
- Get sufficient rest
- Exercise my brain
- Focus on things I can change

## COMMUNITY

*“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.” (I Corinthians 12:12)*

- Practice good stewardship of the gifts that God has given me.
- Communicate frequently, promptly and graciously with others, Using the Judgment of Charity (Benefit of the doubt) continually. Consider others and evaluate the impact of our words and actions continually.
- Be quick to reconcile differences. Take disputes to the offending party first.
- Refrain from gossip, bearing false witness or any form of speaking ill of others.
- Be actively involved with parish community
- Show empathy and share in others' pain and joy Practice patience in dealings with others.
- Forgive each other when mistakes are made. Ask for forgiveness when I make a mistake.
- Reach out to others through conversation and activities
- Be interested in and accepting of other cultures
- Be helpful to all creatures of God

## SERVANT LEADERSHIP

*“The Son of Man has come not to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for the many.” (Matthew 20:28)*

- Listen to understand before talking
- Look for opportunities to be of service to others and be committed to the growth of people
- Work with enthusiasm and to the best of my ability
- Admit mistakes without making excuses
- Be ready and willing to clear up misunderstandings

**St. Charles Preschool and Primary School and Holy Ghost Elementary School**  
**Office Hours and Telephone Numbers**

St. Charles Preschool (Little Macks 3K & 4K/Afterschool) office hours are **7:00 a.m. to 5 p.m.**  
St. Charles Primary and Holy Ghost Elementary K-5 school offices are open from **7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

**St. Charles Preschool office number 715-723-2161**  
**St. Charles Primary office number 715-723-5827**  
**Holy Ghost office number 715-723-6478**  
**MACS Central Office number 715-723-0538**

Our goal in the school offices is to serve our school community in a kind, caring and friendly way. When you call or stop in, you can expect to be greeted by one of the following:

Mrs. Jamie Dodge.....	St Charles Principal
Mrs. Gwen Doyle.....	Holy Ghost Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Gawinski .....	St. Charles Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Julie Yohnk .....	Holy Ghost Administrative Assistant
Ms. Tirzah Dunham.....	Afterschool Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Caitlin McElroy .....	St. Charles/Holy Ghost Counselor



**Schedule of Operation**

**St. Charles Preschool & Primary Grades 3K-2:** Monday-Friday 7:20 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.  
**Holy Ghost Elementary Grades 3-5:** Monday-Friday 7:20 a.m. - 2:35 p.m.  
**St. Charles Afterschool Program:** Monday-Friday 2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. (Non School Days 7-5:30 p.m.)

We ask that you are prompt in picking up your child at the end of the day. For students that are not attending after school care, it is crucial that parents pick up by 2:30 p.m. from St. Charles and Holy Ghost Schools. We understand parents may need to pick up from both schools and just ask that you go straight from one school to the other. Parents picking up from our Afterschool Program are asked to pick up before 5:30 p.m. Bussing is provided by Chippewa Yellow Bus Company for 4K (M-Th) and K-5 (M-F). **All school buildings and programs will be CLOSED in observance of the following holidays, in addition to professional development days and non-school days for Supers & Preschool TBA:**

*Fourth of July*  
*Labor Day*  
*Before Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Day & Day After*  
*Christmas Eve & Christmas Day*  
*New Year's Day*  
*Good Friday*  
*Easter Monday*  
*Memorial Day*

***If there are other days we will let families know at least a month in advance unless it is an emergency.***

## **Emergency School Closings**

MACS will make announcements regarding schedule changes and inclement weather days. A notice will be posted on our website, to your email, Facebook, all local radio stations and TV stations. The local TV stations also have a phone app for weather alerts that you may wish to download.

- School will be dismissed at the regular time on days in which school starts one or two hours late.
- If school is dismissed early, ALL extra and co-curricular activities scheduled for that day will be canceled. This includes Scouting events.
- **Preschools (Little Macks 3K and Supers)** will remain open unless determined by the President and Principal that it is unsafe for students and staff to come in. A phone call to the Preschool Office is encouraged first before bringing your child in during weather issues. **If school is let out early, the Preschool & Afterschool care will close by 4:00pm.**
- It is important for you to make arrangements for your child to get to school on a late start day and home from school on an early dismissal day unless your child is riding a bus. Discussing the plan with your child will help to alleviate fear and anxiety. Any changes in your emergency plan should be sent in writing or emailed to the office.

## **Visiting School**

Guests and family members are welcome at our schools. We have an ongoing invitation for you to join your children for lunch! If you want to visit a specific classroom, please make sure you make arrangements with the principal and/or classroom teacher in advance.

Our parking lots are also our playgrounds. If you come to visit during the school day, we ask that you kindly park on the street. Please do not park in our bus zones. Our school doors are locked during the day for the safety of our children and the staff. Please come to the front door and ring the buzzer. You may be asked to identify yourself and state the reason for your visit before entering.

When you visit our schools during the day, please sign in at the office. You will be given a visitor's badge. This helps our students to know that you are supposed to be in the building. This procedure allows us to know who is in the building at all times, and helps provide for the safety and security of our students and staff.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteering is an excellent way to support our Catholic Schools and live the virtue of charity. Families are required to volunteer a minimum of 30 volunteer hours per school year. Families can sign up for most volunteer events on the MACS web page under Parents-SignUp. Other volunteer activities are recorded and verified by MACS staff. If you are a parent volunteer and cannot be here on your chosen day, we greatly appreciate it when you make arrangements for a replacement. We also encourage parents to make alternate arrangements for younger siblings so that they can enjoy the volunteering experience with their elementary school students. A volunteer handbook is available on the MACS website as well as a link to report your hours. **All volunteers MUST have completed the La Crosse Diocesan Safe Environment and have been approved by the diocesan office before participating in any volunteer opportunities with any McDonell Area Catholic Schools. Contact the MACS Central Office annually for safe environment compliance.**

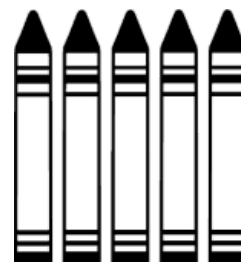
## **St. Charles and Holy Ghost School Faculty and Staff 2024-2025**

**Mrs. Jamie Dodge, St Charles Preschool & Primary School Principal**

**Mrs. Gwen Doyle, Holy Ghost Elementary School Principal**

### **St. Charles Preschool and Primary School**

Mrs. Jenniffer Gawinski	Administrative Assistant (Pre-2)
Ms. Tirzah Dunham	Administrative Assistant (Afterschool)
Miss. Theresia Mrasek-Treleven	3K Teacher
Miss. Christina Simon	3K Paraprofessional
Miss. Nicolette Sorenson	3K Aide
Mrs. Angela Steinmetz	4K Teacher
Mrs. TBA	4K Paraprofessional
Mrs. Krista Misener	Kindergarten
Mrs. Emily Dunham	Kindergarten
Mrs. Shelbie Walker	Kindergarten
Mrs. Samantha Jandourek	First Grade
Mrs. Courtney Okerglicki	First Grade
Mrs. Beth Drake	First Grade
Miss Abigail Adams	Second Grade
Mrs. Lisa Covelli	Second Grade
Mrs. Rebecca Beaufeaux	Music and Art
Mrs. Valerie Siegenthaler	Physical Education
Mrs. Caitlin McElory	School Counselor
Ms. Diane Hietpas	Student Support Services Coordinator
Mrs. Vanessa Talford	Student Support Services Lead
Ms. Jenna Larson	Student Support Services Assistant
Mrs. Kassandra Klinkhammer	Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Leader
Mr. Matt Rose	4K Paraprofessional/Supers
Mr. Max Blogett	Supers
Ms. Siena Emerson	Little Supers
Ms. Kinley Laux	Float
Ms. Aubrey Baier	Little Supers
Ms. Tammy Brown	Cook
Ms. Roxanne Swoboda	Cook
Mrs Alysia Steiger	Little Macks Cook
Mr. Brad Donaldson	Custodian



### **Holy Ghost Elementary School**

Mrs. Julie Yohnk	Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Barb Eckwright	Third Grade
Mrs. Cheri Miller Van Dyke	Third Grade
Mrs. Bridget Ericksen	Fourth Grade
Mrs. Deb Dahl	Fourth Grade
Mrs. Kendra Rogers	Fifth Grade
Ms. Belinda Loew	Fifth Grade
TBD	Music/Band
Mrs. Rebecca Beaufeaux	Art
Mrs. Valerie Siegenthaler	Physical Education and Spanish
Mrs. Caitlin McElory	School Counselor
Ms. Diane Hietpas	Student Support Services Coordinator
TBD	Student Support Services Lead
Mrs. Vanessa Talford	Student Support Services
Mrs. Donna Keck	Cook
Mrs. Elizabeth Blum	Cook
Mr. Ryan Rasmussen	Custodian
Mr. Robert Kinnick	Custodian





## Preschool, Afterschool & Camp Macks Policies & Procedures

### Little Macks 3K

- Is a program that provides all-day care, four to five days per week, children must be 3 years old by September 1st. Children must be potty trained, please view our toilet training policy below. This program includes 10-15 hours of instruction and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Registration for Little Macks 3K is accepted on a rolling basis, subject to availability. Please note that a child must be 4 years old by September 1 to advance to 4K.

### Toilet Training Policy

- **The number one key to successful toilet training is children who can perceive events that are going to happen before they happen**, we cannot allow children to leave the classroom without communication of where the child is going. St. Charles Preschool teachers must know where the children are at all times. Also, In case of emergency, ALL children must be accounted for.
- **A Toilet Trained Child:**
  - A TOILET-trained child is a child who can do the following:
    - They must be able to say the words such as, "I have to go potty" BEFORE they have to go.
    - Work on being able to pull down their underwear and pants and get them back up with minimal assistance
    - Be able to get on and off the potty by themselves.
    - Be able to wash and dry hands.
    - Need to be in underwear.
- **Guidelines for determining when a child is not toilet trained:**
  - If the child has 4 or more accidents, either poop or pee, within 1 week
  - If the child has 6 or more accidents, either poop or pee, within 2 weeks
- St. Charles Preschool and Primary School reserves the right to determine if a child is not fully meeting the guidelines stated above.

### Camp Macks (Summer Only)

- Is a program for students going into 4K - 5th grade which provides fun experiences at a developmentally-appropriate level: Little Camp Macks, Camp Macks I, and Camp Macks II. The program includes field trips, enrichment, vacation bible school, and daily lunch. Summer registration typically opens in January/February and closes when full. Current MACS families are given priority registration.

### Supers

- Is an after school child care program offered at St. Charles School for students in 4K through age 12. Students from Holy Ghost School can also be shuttled to St. Charles at the end of their school day. Snacks, homework time, gross motor and fine motor activities are provided. Students must be registered for SUPERS; they can not just show up for the program if arrangements have not been made in advance. Please contact the St. Charles Preschool & Primary School office for more details and availability.

**Note:** *There is no childcare available at the middle and high school building. Do not have your student ride the bus to the middle and high school building to wait for an older sibling.*

### 3K, Afterschool & Camp Macks Registration

- To register a child for Little Macks 3K, Supers, or Camp Macks, families will need to contact the St. Charles Preschool & Primary School Office. Mid-year registrations may be open, provided the program has capacity. Interested families will meet with the administrator and have a tour of the program. If the family decides to register, registration paperwork must be completed and a non-refundable family registration fee payable by cash or check. All paperwork must be completed and the registration fee must be paid before the child's first day of attendance.

## **Billing for 3K & Afterschool**

- Payment will be due on Fridays. A bi-weekly statement will be made available to each family every other Friday. It will reflect payments made for contracted charges and any additional charges due (ie. for added days, or field trip fees). **If a family hasn't paid the balance on or before the payment due date, a late payment fee of \$15 will be billed to the account.**
- Payment for field trip fees, billing-related fees, registration and supply or activities fees will be billed to the account.
- St. Charles Preschool may refuse to admit a child each day until the family makes the overdue payment in full by check or cash. If the program has not received the overdue payment on or before the next billing cycle or contract period is due, the Principal may suspend or terminate the child's enrollment at St. Charles until outstanding fees are cleared and move forward with the collections process. Re-enrollment is not guaranteed after outstanding fees are cleared. Program administration has the right to deny enrollment for non compliance to policies and procedures in this handbook.

## **Late Pick-Up**

- We ask that you are prompt in picking up your child at the end of the day. When children are still here after operating hours, the State may be notified in the form of a call to the local police or sheriff's department. We must make this call no later than 6:00 p.m. A late pick-up fee of \$1 for every minutes past 5:30 p.m per child. Consistent late pick-up could jeopardize the family's participation and future enrollments in the Program.

## **Contracts For Fee-Based Programs**

- Your contract is a commitment to your payment plan. Contracts are offered
  - **Nine month contracts** (September 1st – June 1st) must be completed and returned to the office by **August 1st**.
  - **Summer Three month contract** (June – August) must be completed and returned to the office by **May 1st**.
- Non-school day contracts are available to all families and are treated like an addendum to your regular contract.
  - **Preschool & Supers will be closed Thanksgiving Break**
  - **Christmas Break will be determined due to numbers that week.**
- If contracted for a day and the child does not attend, there will still be a charge for that day. *Families will be charged for all the days of care that are reserved, even if they are not used.* If a child has personal days available, they may use a personal day credit for this day. Contact the Principal or Preschool Office regarding any personal day questions or concerns.
- Contracts can be found in the Office.
- **A family must have a zero-balance account at the end of their contract term before a new contract begins.**

## **Personal Days**

- Families are granted an allotted number of personal days per child per year based on their contracted schedule. Personal days can be used as frequently as the family chooses, ie. to cover an unexpected change of schedule, sick days or emergency situations. Personal Days can be used by sending an email to the Preschool Administrative Assistant. The used personal days will be deducted from our personal day total, will be credited to your account and will show up on your statement on the next billing cycle.

## **Immediate Termination**

*The Principal may terminate child's enrollment in program effective immediately upon written notice to family of such termination, if any of the following conditions arise.*

It is evident that the child cannot adjust to the program's environment.	An established payment agreement between the administrator and family is not upheld per conditions stated therein.
Based on the administrator's reasonable opinion and observation, the child's behavior significantly and directly threatens the physical or mental health, safety or well-being of enrolled children.	Lack of cooperation from family with the program's efforts to resolve differences and/or meet the child's needs through family/staff meetings or conferences.
The program is not equipped to properly deal with the special needs of the child.	Failure to submit required forms and information.

# HEALTH

## **MACS Wellness Policy**

The McDonell Area Catholic Schools promotes healthy schools by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. By facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity, MACS schools improve academic achievement and positive life-long practices.

**Physical Education Program** - Our physical education curriculum teaches our children the importance of fitness and exercise by exposing students to a wide range of physical activities. These include movement based activities, recreation, team and individual sports. The importance of a well-balanced diet, good hygiene, sufficient sleep, healthy eating, combined with physical activity are encouraged. Health Education classes are taught at the 5th grade level.

**Physical Activity Outside of Physical Education** - MACS promotes daily activities outside of physical education classes. Holy Ghost's morning walking program as well as supervised physical activity at recess is an important part of each school day. We also encourage participation in community events that support wellness and school events such as Kids' Heart Challenge and MACS in Motion.

**Nutrition Programs and Education** - All MACS breakfast and hot lunches meet the DPI nutritional guidelines. We go a step beyond for our students and provide homemade breads, buns and rolls each day. We also serve whole wheat pastas and brown rice. Both white and chocolate milk is served for lunch.

**Snack** - Our parents are asked to send a nutritional snack to school each day for their child. Milk can be purchased to accompany their snack.

**Water Bottles/Drinks** - Students are welcome to bring water bottles to school, but they should only be filled with water. No other drinks should be brought in to school unless it is a special event or occasion in the classroom.

**Gum** - Students are not allowed to bring gum to school unless parents have discussed the need for gum with the students classroom teacher.

## **Allergies**

If your child has special dietary needs due to food allergies or allergies to any particular animals or plants, etc., please contact the school office and complete a Food Allergy Action Plan.

## **Head Lice Procedures**

If a student is found to have head lice (either nits or live lice), parents will be called and the student will be sent home. After the student has been treated and the nits removed, he/she will be allowed back into school. When a child returns to school after an absence due to head lice, the child will be checked by staff to ensure they are free from nits/lice before being allowed to return to class. It is our goal to maintain a safe school environment for all. We ask that you notify the school if you find head lice at home.

## **Health Records**

State law requires that school personnel keep a health record on file for every child in school. You will be asked to indicate health concerns and give updated immunization information at the start of each school year. If your child's health information changes during the school year, we ask that you contact the school office so that we can update your child's health records.

## **Immunization Requirements**

State law requires that all children be immunized prior to enrolling in school unless parents file an exemption waiver. The following are the minimum required immunizations for each age/grade level. Please check with your family doctor or the school office for more information.

AGE / GRADE	NUMBER OF DOSES
Pre K (2 yrs through 4 yrs)	4 DTP/DTaP/DT      3 Polio    3 Hep B    1 MMR    1 Var
Grades K through 5	4 DTP/DTaP/DT/Td      4 Polio    3 Hep B    2 MMR    2 Var

## **Medication Guidelines**

The State Medical Examining Board has issued guidelines for schools concerning the administration of medication by school personnel. The following requirements must be met before school personnel can legally administer medication:

- A parent or legal guardian must sign the proper forms (located in the school office or on the MACS website).
- The child's physician must sign the proper forms (for any prescription medicine).
- Medication must be delivered to the school by the parent or legal guardian.
- The medication must be properly labeled from the pharmacy and the label must match the medication administration form filled out by the physician.

Over the counter medication such as Tylenol or cough drops should be kept in the office, in their original container, with a note from the parents regarding specific instructions for dispensing to their child. The classroom teacher should always be informed when medication is taken at school.

When on hand, ibuprofen or tylenol may be administered after receiving permission from the parent through a phone call or email.

## **Vision and Hearing Screenings**

Vision and hearing screenings are intended to be conducted in the fall of each school year.

# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Admissions Policy & Procedure

### New Families

New Families will be asked to schedule a tour and interview with the administrator. Administrator reviews the application and records of each student interested in placement within the system. Administration determines if a student is qualified for admission based on the student's demonstrated potential to succeed within our educational environment.

- The following factors are taken into consideration on determining if a student seeking admission to McDonell Area Catholic Schools system is qualified:
  - Sincere desire to attend the McDonell Area Catholic Schools system.
  - Successful completion of the previous grade.
  - Record of conduct consistent with the standards of the McDonell Area Catholic Schools system (behavior, financial obligations and attendance).
  - Examination of:
    - Scores on standardized tests
    - Recommendations from the staff of the previous school(s)
    - Grades received from the previous school(s)
  - Full disclosure is required of any and all documents pertinent to the student's tenure at school. Failure to disclose may lead to denial of admission or withdrawal if the student has already been admitted.
- McDonell Area Catholic Schools operate under an admission policy of non-discrimination. McDonell Area Catholic Schools will admit students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin; we will not discriminate against any applicant based on such factors.
- Registrations are for one school year only: re-enrollment normally takes place in January. At this time, the parents/guardians receive re-enrollment information.
- All students are reevaluated on a trimester basis, and if their attendance record, conduct, or academic status is not acceptable, McDonell Area Catholic Schools reserves the right to deny readmission for the following trimester.
- Students are subject to disciplinary processes up to and including dismissal at any time according to our behavior policy.
- As a condition of initial and continued enrollment as a student in the Diocesan Schools, a student's conduct must be consistent with Catholic faith and morals. Conduct which is inconsistent with Catholic faith and morals, which is a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of other students, and/or which causes scandal, impairs or threatens to impair the reputation of the Church or its schools, is grounds for disciplinary sanctions up to and including immediate dismissal (Catholic Faith and Moral Standard DSP 5112).

### SC Screening Process

- **Little Macks Preschool (3K-4K):**
  - Interview with Parents.
  - Parents will fill out student screener form.
- **Kindergarten:**
  - Interview with Parents.
  - Student will shadows for a ½ day during the school year. During their shadow day we will assess the student using our assessment tool (Acadience). During the summer time, student will be asked to come in for an evaluation. (This is only for students attending 4K/homeschool outside of our system).
  - Parents will fill out student screener form.
- **1st-2nd Grade**
  - Interview with Parents.
  - Student will shadows for a full day during the school year. During their shadow day we will assess the student using our assessment tool (Acadience). During the summer time, student will be asked to come in for an evaluation.
- **Transferring for Behavior/Academic Concerns:**
  - Interview with Parents.
  - We do request Student Records.
  - Student will shadow for 2 full days. During their shadow day we will assess the student using our assessment tool (Acadience).

After the screening process is complete, the administrator will either accept or deny the application for enrollment into our school. If accepted, the enrollment coordinator will contact the parents to start the enrollment process. If deny, the administrator will schedule a meeting with the family to explain why the student is not accepted.

## **Enrollment and Placement Policy**

Entrance requirements regarding age and medical records are consistent with our local public school district. A birth certificate and/or baptismal record may be requested upon entrance into 4K. A student must be three year old by September 1st, four years old by September 1st to enter Little Macks 4K and five years old by September 1st to enter kindergarten. Repeating kindergarten will be considered on an individual basis.

Prior to placement the principal and/or school counselor may contact personnel from a student's former school to learn more about the child's past academic and behavioral performance. McDonell Area Catholic Schools would like to ensure that we have the personnel and means to help your child be successful and reach his or her greatest potential.

Student class placement is based on several factors. Teachers and administration work very hard to ensure the proper balance of academic, behavioral and social needs in each classroom. In the spring, if there is a parent class placement request, a meeting will be scheduled with the building administrator. Parent request deadline is April 1st. Special classroom requests will be given serious consideration, however, the administration reserves the right to place every child in an educational environment where their academic, social and emotional needs can best be met.

Student grade placement is very important. When students advance a grade level when they are not ready, they may have important gaps in their education. They may also struggle to interact with students of a different age level. Students who are retained in a grade level for an additional year may also struggle. Therefore, MACS considers grade level promotion and retention very seriously. Additional testing and data collection will be required to make an educated decision, in collaboration with parents, regarding a student's grade level placement. If you have any concerns regarding your child's placement, please contact school administration.

## **Grades 4K - 5 Attendance and Truancy Policy**

Regular attendance is very important to success in school and is required by the state of Wisconsin. Because of this, we ask that you schedule appointments and vacations around the school calendar whenever possible. Please support your child's daily attendance. We know that when children are in school regularly they find school more enjoyable and are more successful. Lifelong patterns of responsibility and self-discipline of regular attendance and promptness are fostered by attention given them during the years of school attendance.

McDonell Area Catholic Schools believes there is a strong relationship between classroom attendance and student success. McDonell Area Catholic Schools reserves the right to count an absence without a valid excuse as unexcused.

**Our 3K-2 instructional day begins promptly at 7:40 a.m and 3-5 instructional day begins promptly at 7:35 a.m.** Students are considered tardy if they are not in the building by that time. Parents are asked to call school between 7:15 and 7:40 a.m. to notify the school office when a student will be tardy or absent.

When you call, please indicate the reason for your child's absence. The absence of your student from school without permission is considered truant. If there is no communication about the reason for your student's absence, it will be documented as unexcused. If attendance becomes an issue, school administration will work closely with you to help you improve attendance before serious consequences arise.

### **Absences**

MACS makes a special effort to make sure all of our students are benefitting fully from their education by attending school regularly. Attending school on a regular basis helps children feel better about school. Children start building this habit in preschool to help them learn right away that attending school on time and everyday is important. Attending school consistently will help children be more successful in high school, college and at work.

If, in general, attendance is not a problem (meaning your child has only a few absences throughout the year), we will try to be understanding and accommodating of special needs to take a child out of school. If attendance is a concern (many tardies or absences), we may not be able to excuse absences that are not of a serious nature. **If a family plans a vacation during the school year, work should not be expected to be provided ahead of time.**

- **Excused Absences:**

- Parents/guardians must call the school office (715-723-5827) to report a student absent before 7:40 a.m. on the day in which the absence occurs.
  - When a student is given an excused absences **5 times** in a semester, the administrator will email the parents/guardians.
  - When a student is given an excused absences **10 times** in a semester, the administrator will call the parents/guardians.
  - **After 10 excused** absences, a doctor's note may be requested in order to excuse more absences.
    - Per Wisconsin Law, parents/guardians are able to excuse 10 absences per semester (August 27th, 2024 until January 17th, 2025) (January 20th 2025 until May 23rd, 2025).
    - If attendance does not improve, a truancy referral will be made to Chippewa County.

- Parents/guardians should note that reasons for absences should be related to the following:

- Illnesses that prevent a child from learning, or are contagious to other children
- Medical appointments that cannot be scheduled after the school day
- A death in the family
- Religious holidays
- Family emergencies such as a significant illness of another family member
- Attendance at unique learning experiences outside of school

- **Truancy Policy:**

- In accordance with Wisconsin law, parents/guardians are responsible for their child's attendance. If a child is consistently absent, the administration has the right to consider him or her truant. The State of Wisconsin considers truancy as **five unexcused absences** or **10 excused absences per semester**. After working with the family, administration may deem that the School Liaison Officer needs to get involved.

- **Truancy Process:**

- Truancy letters **will be sent** after **3 unexcused absences** occur within a given semester.
- A meeting will be held with parents/ guardians and the student after **5 unexcused absences** occur within a given semester.
- Students who are consistently truant may also be referred to Chippewa County Juvenile Service for violation of the Wisconsin Compulsory Attendance Law.

According to WI DPI, in order to file truancy, a student must have at least 5 unexcused absences per semester (August 27th - January, 17th / January 20th - May 23rd).

## **Tardies**

**Our K-5 instructional day begins promptly at 7:40 a.m.** Students are considered tardy if they are not in the building by that time. Parents are asked to call school between 7:15 and 7:40 a.m. to notify the school office when a student will be tardy or absent. Similarly, if a student will be tardy for the morning or afternoon **Little Macks 4K** session, please call the Preschool Administrative Assistant at least 15 minutes ahead of start time for that session.

- **Tardies Process:**

- An email will be sent by administration after **3 unexcused tardies** occur within a given semester.
- A phone call from administration after **5 unexcused tardies** occur within a given semester.
- **10 or more unexcused tardies** in a semester will require a letter to be sent home and an in person meeting with parents and administration will be requested.
  - If attendance/tardies do not improve, a truancy referral will be made to Chippewa County. According to the WI Department of Public Instruction, 2024-2025 semesters are defined as August 27th - January, 17th / January 20th - May 23rd.

## **Dropping Off Late and Leaving School Early Policy**

If your child is arriving at school after 7:40 am, a parent or guardian will need to bring their child into the building and sign them in.

If your child is leaving school early, we ask that you send an email or call the **office** to let us know the time and reason your child will be leaving. A parent or guardian is required to come to the office to sign their student out. The classroom teacher will then be called and asked to send your child to meet you in the office.

## **Behavior Philosophy**

The driving philosophy behind the Behavior/Discipline policy at MACS is one that seeks to instill habits of faith, accountability, self control, love and respect. Our goal is that our staff develop positive relationships with each of our students so they can effectively lead with empathy, patience and understanding.

In order to support the philosophy of MACS Behavior/Discipline policy, it is our intention to create an ever growing bond with families. Families have a primal and moral responsibility of educating the children to adulthood. Alongside this support from families, MACS teachers and staff are working to educate, inspire, support, and drive our students into being the best version that God has created them to be.

It is particularly important that teachers and parents support/expect students to consistently display the habits of respectful submission to appropriate authority and diligent effort in completing assigned tasks.

As a teacher, one of the principal responsibilities is to cultivate an atmosphere of learning where love, respect and joy are ever present. Love in a classroom is characterized by an acceptance of the human dignity of all persons. The teacher demonstrates care and kindness, not permissiveness. A high regard for all is seen in a classroom, where respect for oneself and others is established. Joy is the well being the student feels through varied experiences in the classroom whether delightful or challenging. The expectations for students at McDonell Area Catholic Schools are thoughtfully determined in order to create an optimal environment for each child's growth.

- As we focus on creating a Christ-like atmosphere in our schools, there may still be adverse experiences a child may encounter. Our goal is to come alongside the student within their challenges and assist in the growth of their own personal development.
- Cliques, favoritism and other forms of exclusivity at school are to be avoided. Our aim is to be inclusive rather than exclusive in our relationships. Manners, courtesies and gracious treatment should be maintained at all times among the school family.

### **Bullying Policy and Procedures**

Our goal is to make sure our Catholic Schools are a safe, caring place where learning happens. We work to incorporate our Catholic beliefs into every aspect of our school system including our behavior policy. We believe that **“the signs of the spirit are among us . . . love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustworthiness, gentleness and self control.” (Galatians 5:22-23)**

We believe that in order to reach our goal that all students should be respectful, responsible and come to class ready to learn. The following chart lists our behavioral expectations.

A student shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation.

- If students are repeatedly bullying others, students will be asked to do sessions with either the guidance counselor or administrator on bullying.



## **Behavioral Virtues**

*Includes: Administration, Teachers, Staff, Students, Coaches and Volunteers*

<p><b><u>RESPECT</u></b> <i>"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Showing and acting in a manner that will accept all people's wellbeing.</li> <li>● Welcoming and caring for all of God's creations.</li> <li>● Using good manners, and doing your best in class.</li> <li>● Respect for God's People             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Students are to treat others with kindness, respect and generosity.</li> <li>○ Students are expected to show appropriate regard for all school property.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b><u>PRUDENCE</u></b> <i>"God made our brains to form positive habits automatically through repetition"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A positive behavior that becomes natural and is repeated regularly.</li> <li>● Every student is expected to put forth a worthy effort to give full attention and to carefully complete all assigned tasks.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>LOVE</u></b> <i>"Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Showing a genuine concern for the good of others, with selfless acts of kindness</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>SELF-CONTROL</u></b> <i>"For the spirit of God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Resisting and avoiding impulses.</li> <li>● Responding to do what God asks of you</li> <li>● Action through 100% effort</li> </ul>

## **Handling Infractions of Behavioral Expectations (4 Tiers)**

1. **Minor Behavioral Habit:** Students and teachers will work on positive redirection of habits. Through this interaction, trust and respect will be earned from both teachers/staff with students when communicating regularly when challenges arise. Expectations will be reiterated as a continuous reminder of high standards. At the teacher's discretion, a student situation will escalate to a Repeated Behavioral Habit.
  - A Minor Behavioral Act is defined as:
    - Impulsive disobedience, impulsive/disruptive body movements, repeatedly talking out of turn, words that are hurtful/demeaning to another, etc.

**\*Teacher redirects; teacher assesses the situation and tries to find the root of the behavior. Teachers will meet with the students one on one to discuss the habit that the student needs to work on. Teacher will document. Student habit becomes a repeated act after 3-4 minor acts. Unless it is an intentional physical altercation, it moves to deliberate act. Teacher will update Administration.**

2. **Repeated Behavioral Act:** A Teacher or Staff who is working through a Minor Behavioral Habit, where the situation escalates or the student is not forming a good habit, will result in the parents / guardians being contacted by the teacher through email or by phone regarding students behavior.
  - A Repeated Behavioral Act is defined as:
    - A pattern of impulsive behavior, class disruptions, arguing, tardiness, hurtful words towards and/or swearing at Students, Staff, Administration or Volunteers
    - An adverse action from a student that needs to be addressed multiple times.

**\*Teacher will email or call the parent about repeated behavior; student loses privileges or has a consequence that matches the habit (loss of free time, make up time during the day, and will have scheduled time to meet with administration/guidance counselor to discuss habit). (Replace the bad habit with a good habit). Administrator/Interventionist/Guidance Counselor will observe student behavior where it is happening most often. If continued after strategies or redirection have been implemented this could result in an in-school suspension.**

3. **Deliberate Act:** If a continuous poor habit occurs the administration and school counselor will discuss options and come up with a plan to create a successful habit. A phone call and or email to the parents/guardians will be given by the administrator. The consequence of this meeting may result in an in-school or out-of-school suspension.
- A Deliberate Act is defined as:
    - Verbal or physical altercation with a Student, Staff, Administration or Volunteer (ex: repeated shoving in the heat of competition, punching, hitting/slapping, pushing and/or kicking)
    - Cheating on school work
    - An escalation of a Minor Behavioral Act or Repeated Behavioral Act (ex: constant disruption, arguing—given tools and strategies and met with parents).
    - Physically breaking or damaging school property
    - Students will be fined for damage to any books, materials or property that has been damaged beyond normal wear.

**\*Administrator will investigate the situation. If the situation is concluded that the student was deliberate in their actions, administration will call parents; Any kind of deliberate act of physical altercation will result in an in-school suspension. If it happens again we move to a morally disobedient act.**

4. **Morally Disobedient Act:** After a student has a repeated offense or has developed a morally perverse or disobedient act, an immediate meeting/conversation will happen with the Principal, parents, student (and teachers if needed). The consequence of this meeting may result in an out-of-school suspension, possible probation, or expulsion.
- A Morally Disobedient Act is defined as:
    - A verbal, written, or physical act of violence against one or more persons (Students, Staff, Administration, or Volunteers).
    - Usage, or possession of drugs, alcohol, or other illegal substances.
    - Repeated foul language.
    - Illicit images or content (digitally or physically).
    - Students will be fined for damage to any property that has been damaged beyond normal wear.
    - Impulsive behaviors that affect Teachers, Staff, Administration or others that escalate from a minor behavioral habit, to repeated, and deliberate and there is a need for a meeting with parents / guardians.

**\*Administrators will call parents; students will be given an out of school suspension and asked to be picked up that day. The out-school suspension would start the next day. Upon returning from a suspension from school, the principal will call a meeting with parents and teacher to create a re-entry plan. If a moral disobedient act continues, the administrator, teacher and parents will meet again to discuss probation and what the next step will be. Administrator will look into expulsion.**

### **Dismissal**

As a condition of initial and continued enrollment as a student in the Diocesan Schools, a student's conduct must be consistent with Catholic faith and morals. Conduct which is inconsistent with Catholic faith and morals, which is a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of other students, and/or which causes scandal, impairs or threatens to impair the reputation of the Church or its schools, is grounds for disciplinary sanctions up to and including immediate dismissal (Catholic Faith and Moral Standard DSP 5112). Only the Principal or the President of McDonell Area Catholic Schools has the right to dismiss a student. Any student dismissed or withdrawn may not be on MACS school property or be present at school functions without the permission of the Principal or President.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Administrative Recourse (adapted from DSR 5901) Outline of the chain of authority to be followed in resolving disputes at Catholic School Systems:

1. Teacher, coach, or other school employee
  2. Principal
  3. President
  4. Dean
  5. Diocesan Bishop (or assigned delegate)
- Administrative Recourse Procedure in the Diocese of La Crosse:
    - Note 1: The consequence during the recourse procedure is to be enforced. (DSP 5902)
    - Note 2: During the administrative recourse process, it is understood that while working to reconcile an authority may seek the assistance of others, especially those respected for their ability to reconcile; but the authority remains responsible for seeking the resolution to the conflict.

## **Cell Phones, Electronics, and Internet Use Policy**

Students are **prohibited** from using cell phones, iPads, smartphone-type devices such as the Apple iWatch, pagers and other electronic devices in school buildings or at any school sponsored activity or field trip unless authorized by a staff member.

**For safety reasons, elementary students must turn cell phones into the office as soon as they arrive in the morning.** Violations can lead to phone confiscation in which case parents may be called to come pick up their child's phone in the office. Phones will be available to be picked up by the student at the end of each school day.

### **Internet Use Policy**

***Internet use is an important learning tool that students will use from time to time. For these instructional purposes, classroom teachers may use the Internet for child-appropriate activities. No unsupervised use of the Internet by students is allowed. Any student use will be on district-approved or staff-reviewed sites.***

#### ***I. Educational Purpose - Use the Internet only for school activities.***

- The MACS Internet connection has been established for educational purposes. These include class activities, career development, and various high-quality discovery activities.
- McDonell schools have the responsibility to place reasonable restrictions on material accessed or posted through its network or devices.

#### ***II. Personal Responsibility - Where you go on the Internet is not a secret.***

- Users should keep in mind that when they use the Internet, they are entering a global community, and any actions taken by them reflects upon them and the school as a whole. Therefore, all users will behave in an ethical and legal manner.
- Internet, lab or network maintenance and monitoring may lead to individual data scans or security reviews if there is reasonable suspicion that a user has violated this policy. This includes camera surveillance.
- When you use a computer network.
  - You leave electronic footprints. The odds of getting caught doing something illegal or immoral are as good as they are in the real world. Your use of the Internet can be a mirror that will show what kind of person you are.
  - McDonell uses firewalls and filtering software to monitor content and activity 24/7 together with student and teacher vigilance as promoted by [class instruction and/or staff development](#).

#### ***III. Unacceptable Uses***

- Do not give out personal information about yourself or others.
- Users should not post personal contact information that reveals your location such as an address or telephone number. Students should not reveal another person's name, address, or telephone number, nor transmit or use pictures of others without their consent.
- Users agree not to meet someone in person who they have met online without parent approval.
- Users should promptly tell a teacher or an administrator about any message that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, obscene or profane material, and other antisocial behaviors are unacceptable in any communication.
- As protection against a claim that you have intentionally violated this policy, should you mistakenly access inappropriate information, immediately inform your teacher, principal, guidance counselor, technology director or administrator.
- The MACS system fully expects that students will follow their parent's instructions to access appropriate material.
- Each of the schools will integrate digital literacy into portions of the curriculum.

#### ***IV. System Security - Do not use technology to go where you are not supposed to go.***

- Do not attempt to gain access to any other computer system through the Internet beyond your authorized access. Do not look for security problems. This may be construed as an illegal attempt to gain access. Immediately notify a teacher or the technology director if you have identified a possible security problem.
- Do not make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer system or destroy data.
- Do not attempt to bypass security restrictions that are in place to protect network integrity, including any internet filtering mechanism.

#### ***V. Respecting Resource Limits - Share our resources with others.***

- MACS has a reasonably fast network, internet connections and 1:1 and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiatives. Nonetheless, network resources and availability may at times be limited. Academic use always takes priority.
- Paper use is monitored. Please conserve and use print resources wisely.

## **VI. Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement - Do not copy without giving proper credit.**

- All information accessible online should be assumed to be subject to copyright protection. Internet sources should be credited appropriately, as with the use of any copyrighted material.
- Users will not transfer or store copyrighted materials through the network because, in some cases, such actions may result in legal action being taken against MACS as well as the user.

## **VII. Consequences for Violation of the Internet Acceptable Use Policy**

- Violations of this Internet Acceptable Use Policy may result in the loss of network privileges. Repeated or severe violations may result in disciplinary action. McDonell Area Catholic Schools will cooperate fully with law enforcement officials in any investigation related to any illegal activity conducted through the MACS digital network.

## **Dress Code Policy**

McDonell Area Catholic Schools require student attire that is conducive to a learning environment. MACS has established guidelines to help in matters of appropriate dress for elementary students.

**Uniform Closet:** For your convenience, each school has a uniform exchange sponsored by Home and School. Please feel free to take clothing from the uniform exchange free of charge. Give back by dropping off lightly used uniform appropriate clothing which no longer fits your children at the uniform exchange. If a student is out of uniform, we will help them find clothing from the closet to wear for the day and bring home.

**Little Macks 3K** does not have a dress code. Parents are asked to send their children in clean, comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing and footwear, including appropriate outdoor clothing. A change of clothes should be available in their backpacks everyday.

## **Daily Dress Code**

- **4K to 5th**
  - **Pants:** Students may wear **solid black, gray, navy blue or khaki dress pants**. No joggers or leggings.
  - **Shirts:** Collared or turtleneck shirts of **solid white, red, pink, yellow, gray, black or any shade of blue** with or without MACS school-logo (long or short sleeve) may be worn. T-shirts are allowed only on non-uniform days.
  - **Sweaters/Sweatshirts: Solid white, red, pink, yellow, gray, black or any shade of blue sweaters or non-hooded sweatshirts.** Logos, including MACS logos, should be 3x3 inches or less. Hooded sweatshirts/sweaters are allowed only on non uniform days. MACS sweatshirts must have logos that are 3x3 or smaller unless on Fridays.
  - **Skirts/Jumpers:** Girls may wear **solid gray, black, navy blue or khaki skirts or jumpers** of appropriate length with collared shirts or blouses.
  - **Dresses:** Dresses must be **solid gray, black, navy, white, red, pink, yellow, or gray.**
  - **Shoes, socks and tights:** Sturdy shoes or tennis shoes are recommended. Socks, tights and leggings of **solid white, gray, black or navy blue** may be worn under a jumper or a skirt. Girls wearing a skirt are asked to wear leggings during non-shorts season. Cowboy/Cowgirl, Work Boots may be worn, but Tennis Shoes are required when active in the gym or outside. Socks must be worn at all times.
  - **4K Only** may wear stretchy knits, sweat pants, and MACS/Macks spirit wear in addition to the above options.
  - Bandanas, hats, hooded sweatshirts, and fleece jackets may only be worn outdoors.
  - All clothes should be free of rips, tears, or holes.

## **Shorts Season: April 1-October 31**

- **3K to 5th**
  - **Solid black, gray, navy blue or khaki dress shorts (no jeans shorts), skorts or capris may be worn with uniform shirts through October 31st and again starting April 1, until the end of the school year.**
  - During shorts season only, sandals with heel straps may be worn but are not recommended. Students should wear athletic shoes on Phy-Ed days.
  - Students will not be allowed to change into/out of shorts during the school day. Plan accordingly.

## **Physical Education**

- **4K to 5th**
  - Students at St. Charles do not change for Phy-Ed. All students are required to have well-fitting athletic shoes on Phy-Ed days.
  - **At Holy Ghost only,** modest clothing for Phy-Ed consists of t-shirts and long shorts or sweatpants. Socks and athletic shoes are required.
  - Being prepared for class counts for part of the Phy-Ed grade for students in grades 3-5.

## **Jeans/MACS Spirit Wear Fridays**

- **4K to 5th**
  - Every Friday (unless otherwise indicated), students are allowed to wear jeans with a uniform shirt or MACS spirit wear shirt/hooded sweatshirt.

## **Special Events and Non-Uniform Days**

- **4K to 5th**
  - You will be informed in email and/or flyer of days when uniforms are not required (dress-up days, special events, etc.). Acceptable attire will be stated in a note.
  - Team jerseys can be worn on a school day if there is a game that day of a playoff celebration.
  - Stretchy knits, denim jeans, sweat pants, wind pants, shoes with heels over one inch may only be worn for special events or on a non-uniform day (see above for 4K exception)

## **Jewelry and other external**

- **3K to 5th**
  - Makeup may only be worn for special events and with the approval of a parent/guardian.
  - Headbands are allowed.
  - Hair color must be natural or can be colored black, brown, or blonde, and free of tinsel.

## **Dress Code Infractions**

1. The first time a student is out of dress code, a parent will be emailed.
2. The second time a student is out of dress code, a slip will come home that parents will sign and return from the teacher.
3. The third time a student is out of uniform, we will help them find clothing from the closet to wear for the day and bring home. There will be a follow-up phone call and/or email from administration.

## **Playground Attire**

Children should dress appropriately for the weather and for the type of play they want to engage in. Warm coats, snow pants, hats, mittens and boots are required for winter recesses. Boots are required if snow is on the ground. Coats, hats and gloves are required when it is below 30 degrees. Snow Pants are strongly encouraged for warmth regardless of snow. When below 50, students should always bring a coat outside, though they may take it off if they are uncomfortable. Children should wear clothes that they feel free to play in. If you have a daughter who wants to climb, hang or tumble, you will want to send her in clothes that are appropriate for those activities.

## **Fees and Payments**

All field trip fees must be paid prior to your student's participation. If families pay more than what the field trip costs, the money will be put toward the students' account. All other school payments (such as hot lunch, library books, etc.) must be paid prior to the end of the school year. Any school events where money is collected must be approved in advance by the building principal.

## **Field Trip Policy**

Occasionally our teachers and students leave school property to take an educational field trip. All parents/guardians (3K-5th) will be asked to sign a general permission slip that allows their child to leave school grounds. You will also be notified in writing before each off site field trip. Students are expected to maintain appropriate behaviors when on a field trip.

Parents who have completed the Diocesan Safe Environment and have been approved by our diocesan office may volunteer and/or be asked to chaperone a field trip. Contact the MACS Central Office annually for safe environment compliance. Parents are expected to provide supervision for an assigned group of students on each field trip. We encourage parents to make alternate arrangements for younger siblings so that they can enjoy the field trip experience with their elementary school students. The staff tries to give all interested parents an opportunity to join us for field trips but the number of accompanying parents may be limited for certain outings. Because field trips are a part of the curriculum, we encourage all students to attend. If a student has been excused from a field trip by their parents, the school may not be able to provide childcare for the student for the duration of the field trip. Please make other arrangements for your child if the class will be off campus for the entire school day.

## **Fundraising Policy**

**\*\*Subject to change due to policy and procedures changing in the coming summer of 2024.**

McDonell Area Catholic Schools limits the number of system wide fundraisers. Our three primary fundraisers are Scrip, the Spaghetti Spectacular, held the second Sunday in November, and the Mardi Gras celebration, held on the second Saturday in February. Parents are asked to volunteer to help at each of the events. The Scrip gift card program helps to offset a student's tuition and provides needed funding for McDonell Area Catholic Schools. Parents and family members, friends and supporters are encouraged to purchase local or national gift cards on a regular basis. Learn more about our fundraisers on our website under Support MACS.

Smaller student fundraisers such as a bake sale may be held in the individual schools (with prior administrative approval) to help defray the cost of large field trips or for the purchase of specific, approved items.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Every Catholic school in the La Crosse Diocese respects the dignity of each individual and, therefore, will not discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, or sex in regard to enrollment. The Diocese of La Crosse has the obligation to publicize its nondiscrimination policies. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit, MACS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational and admissions policies, scholarship and financial aid, and athletic and other school programs.

## **Photo Usage Policy**

Throughout the school year, students and parents are photographed or videotaped during classroom activities, special programs or events. The pictures are used to share MACS news and successes of your children. Photos would be used in newsletters, yearbooks, MACS promotional items, on the website, in social media, in local newspapers, etc. The Diocese of La Crosse may also use your child's photo.

**NOTE:** *MACS and the Diocese of La Crosse reserve the right to choose which photographs are used, when they are used, and for what length of time they will be posted.*

In order to be certain we do not infringe on the privacy of your child/family we ask your permission first. You will be given the opportunity to opt out of photo permissions during the enrollment process.

## **Playground Policy**

MACS playground rules are made to protect all children on the playground and to keep them safe. For this reason, it is important that everyone knows and obeys the rules and guidelines. These are posted in each classroom and throughout our school building. Our playground supervisor, parent volunteers and teachers are on the playground to help keep our children safe but occasionally bumps and falls occur. If this happens, students are escorted to the office for band-aids, ice packs and some tender loving care. If the injury is severe or questionable, parents will be notified by phone.

## **Religious Expectations**

According to Diocesan policy DSP 6225: Non-Catholic students fully enrolled in a Catholic school are required to participate in all school activities and courses as Catholic students, provided such activity is permitted by Canon Law. All students attending McDonell Area Catholic Schools are expected to attend our weekly school Masses. Little Macks 3K will not regularly attend school Mass but may do so on occasion. Little Macks 4K will attend at least monthly school Mass after the first trimester. Those students who have received their First Communion will be allowed to receive the Holy Eucharist at Mass. **Attendance at our weekly school Mass does not fulfill your weekend Mass obligation.** We encourage all families to attend church together on the weekends and to participate in their parish events. All students are expected to participate in all religion classes and religion activities that are school related. All students are expected to understand, follow and live the Catholic virtues of faith, hope, charity, prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance, respect and friendship. These virtues are part of our curriculum and encouraged in our daily routines, school activities and events.



Parents and guardians are welcomed and encouraged to attend Mass with their child and his/her classmates any time. Students at both schools usually attend Mass on Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m.

### **Separated/Divorced Parent Policy**

MACS elementary schools maintain strict neutrality between parents who are involved in an action affecting the family, unless otherwise directed by a court order.

Prior to the beginning of each school year, each parent enrolling a student will be requested to provide the principal with current information regarding any court order that indicates specific rights for the child's parents. In the absence of a court order, neither parent will have rights over the other parent. A form authorizing individuals for pick up from school will be sent to every family at the beginning of the year. It is of the utmost importance that we have up to date information regarding who is allowed to pick up the child(ren) from school. Should any arrangements change throughout the course of the school year, the custodial parent(s) are required to approve changes to the authorized pick up list. This is for the benefit and safety of all students in our schools.

Unless directed by a court order, both parents, custodial and noncustodial, are entitled to all grade reports, newsletters, disciplinary action and teacher/principal conference appointments. Delivery of all such information will be made in the same manner to both parents. This information will be sent with the child unless other arrangements are made with the administration.

### **Student Support Services Policy**

Students who demonstrate academic or behavioral needs may be eligible to receive some assistance through a MACS Accommodation Plan. This plan is not a legal document, and is not a substitute for special education services. MACS Accommodation Plans are created through collaboration with teachers, student support staff, buildings administrators and students (when appropriate).

Students who have disabilities may be eligible for an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) or 504 Accommodation Plan through the Chippewa Falls Unified School District. Determination of eligibility is made through formal evaluation by Chippewa Falls school psychologists. More information on rights of students with disabilities who attend private schools can be found on the WI Department of Instruction's website: [dpi.gov/sped/topics/private-schools](http://dpi.gov/sped/topics/private-schools)

Families who transfer to MACS from another school are asked to sign a form releasing their students' records to MACS, and to share any information about previous special education and academic or behavioral intervention.

### **Title I and Support Services Policy**

Title I is a Federal program to assist schools with meeting the needs of students who live in households with income levels that qualify for free and reduced lunch. MACS elementary students who qualify may receive Title I services through the public school system.

If you have any questions, there are resources available through the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction or the Federal Department of Education. You are also encouraged to contact our school staff for more information.

### **Tobacco and Alcohol Use Policy**

No smoking, vaping, or alcohol consumption is allowed in school buildings. Exceptions for alcoholic beverage consumption on school premises or at school-sponsored activities may occur only when specifically permitted in writing and approved by the school administrator or president and when such use is consistent with state law, local ordinances, and school policies.

### **Electronic Devices and Toys from Home Policy**

Please do not send any electronic devices, toys, or valuables from home to school. We try to provide all indoor and outdoor recess equipment that students need. In addition, electronic devices, toys and items such as trading cards, Pokemon cards, hand-held video games, etc., can be very distracting to learning.

If students have non-school electronic devices or other prohibited items at school, they may be taken away. In some cases, the toys will be returned to students at the end of the school day. In other situations, a parent or guardian will have to come to school to pick up what has been taken from the child.

**Vandalism Policy**

Our goal is to be respectful of our buildings, furnishings and supplies. Students will be taught how to care for materials and supplies. Teachers will also inspect materials before they are checked out to students. If a student breaks, damages or vandalizes (writes on, carves into, etc.) anything at school, parents will be notified and repairs or replacement fees will be expected. Please discuss this policy with your child to help keep our buildings, furnishings and supplies in good condition. We are proud of our schools!

**Weapons Policy**

No weapons are allowed on school property at any time except by authorized law enforcement personnel. Suspension and expulsion are possible consequences for violations of this policy. No Guns, Knives, Weapons or Lighters are allowed on property.



# STUDENT LIFE

## **Birthdays and Special Events**

We enjoy recognizing student birthdays at our schools and do so at our “Merry Monday and Terrific Tuesday” meetings as well as in individual classrooms. All treats, whether birthday or special events, *must be approved in advance by the classroom teacher.*

Parties are very exciting and a child may want to hand out birthday invitations at school. If the invitations are distributed in school, they must include the entire class, or all the boys or all the girls. We ask that invitations be mailed to a child’s home when only a few students are invited to a party in order to avoid hurting the feelings of those students who are not invited.

## **Class Pictures**

Individual student photographs as well as class composites will be taken in the fall. Photograph packets may be purchased by families. The pictures will also be published in “The Little MACS” yearbook in the spring.

## **Homework**

We believe that when parents, students and teachers work together, students learn more. Some teachers do encourage non grading packets for your child, so they can have some extra practice with families, as well as parents engaging in their child’s school work.

Teachers at St. Charles and Holy Ghost schools may assign homework according to the following guidelines:

<b>3K-K Grade</b>	<b>No Homework</b>	<b>3rd Grade</b>	<b>30 minutes total</b>
<b>1st Grade</b>	<b>10 minutes total</b>	<b>4th Grade</b>	<b>40 minutes total</b>
<b>2nd Grade</b>	<b>20 minutes total</b>	<b>5th Grade</b>	<b>50 minutes total</b>

Some homework assignments will require family assistance and others should be completed independently by the student. Students are encouraged to read independently and with their parents at least 20 minutes each night. This consistent reading will greatly improve your child’s reading achievement. We hope that you see homework as a way to follow your child’s learning and as an opportunity to partner in your child’s education. If at any time you feel that your child has more work than the time indicated above, please reach out to your child’s teacher immediately.

If missing assignments persist, the classroom teacher will email or call you, but ultimately it is your child’s responsibility to complete his/her assignments. It is important that parents take time to read and sign their child’s planner each night so that you are aware. In the event your child misses a day or more of school, he or she will be given reasonable time to make up missing assignments. Homework will not be given to a student prior to their absence.

## **Lost Textbooks or Library Books**

Reading is fundamental to learning. Students K-5 are encouraged to check books out to take home to read. Library books are available to K-5 students in the school library throughout the school year. Students (K-5) are expected to return their library books by their due date. During the school year, students will be reminded to return any overdue books. In the event a student loses a library book, the student will be given a window of time to purchase an exact copy to replace the lost book, or they may choose to pay a \$20 replacement fee. The librarian will then replace the book. If no action is taken to rectify the situation by the end of the school year, the \$20 fee will be added to the family’s portal account.

## **School Lunch**

Free and reduced lunches are available to those who qualify. You may apply anytime during the school year in the MACS Central Office. Lunch menus will be available on the MACS website.

Each student has his/her own lunch number and a family lunch account is set up on Infinite Campus where payments can be deposited at any time. Lunch and milk payments should be sent to the school in a clearly marked envelope with the child's name, amount of money enclosed and the purpose of the payment (i.e. lunch account). Students' envelopes will be collected in the classroom at the beginning of the school day, then sent to the office and deposited into your family's lunch account. You may send lunch payments to your child's school or to the MACS Central Office. Wherever it is received, it will be deposited into your family account.

### **Students have two options at lunch**

- Enjoy a hot lunch offered by our Food Service Department for \$2.85 a day.
- Bring a sack lunch (cold lunch). Students may bring their own beverage or buy milk for \$0.50. Because we believe a nutritious lunch is important for health and learning, *pop and sugary drinks are not allowed*. Adults are not permitted to bring take out food to school for their children. Please save restaurant outings for family meals.

### **Family Members Joining Us**

- Please call the school office ahead of time and let us know that you are coming. 24 hour notice is appreciated.
- Sign in and get a visitor's badge at the office.
- Please pay in the school office, in advance, if you plan to eat a school hot lunch. (Guest lunch cost is \$4.65)
- You may also bring your own sack lunch from home.
- Wait near the office until your child's class starts down for lunch.
- Although it is a special lunch for you and your child, we ask that you help us by following all established school rules. Please listen to and follow the directions of the adult lunchroom teachers and workers.

**No food can be shared with other children. This is an important health and safety rule.**

## **MACS Mentor Program**

MACS provides a faith-based mentoring program to MACS students who would benefit from additional adult volunteer mentoring on a weekly basis. Volunteers are screened and Safe Environment certified. The MACS Mentor Program coordinator is Mrs. Caitlin McElory, our School Counselor.

## **Phone Calls to/from Students**

We ask that you try to make all arrangements with your children before the start of the school day. Sometimes things come up during the day, so if you need to get a message to your child, **call the office** and we will see that it gets to him/her. Messages for students that we receive near the end of the day are the most difficult for us to deliver. Please plan ahead so that we can avoid problems that can arise from last minute changes in plans.

Students are allowed to make emergency calls from the office, but we highly discourage them from using the phone for arranging rides, getting assignments, band instruments or gym clothes, or making social plans. This is a great time for students to learn the virtue of responsibility.

## **Outdoor Weather Policy**

The decision to have recess inside or outside will be made by the administrators and/or recess duties supervisor. The outdoor weather policy for cold weather is as follows:

- All children will be expected to go outside when the actual temperature and wind chill is 0 degrees and above.
- All children will stay indoors for recess when the actual temperature and wind chill is below 0 degrees.
- All children will stay indoors if the weather is too inclement for outdoor play.

Although recess is usually an unstructured time for our students, we have found that we still need a few guiding rules.

## **Playground Behavior**

The same behaviors that are expected in school will be expected on the playground (refer to behavior policy). All students and staff are to be respectful of each other, responsible for their actions and if a conflict arises in play, students are expected to try to solve the problem themselves. If that doesn't work, they are encouraged to seek help from the teacher, playground supervisor or parent volunteer. When a student is unruly, disobedient, displaying harmful behaviors or involved in unsafe activities, refuses to listen to reminders and/or does not respond to directions, he/she may be temporarily "timed-out". Our time-out area on the playground is against the building wall. Depending on the misbehavior, the playground supervisor may discuss it with the student and/or the student's classroom teacher or principal. Appropriate consequences may result. It is our belief that playground incidents should be handled immediately and during the school day but we recognize that this is not always possible. If that is the case, parents may be notified or called.

First aid is available in the office or carried in a fanny pack. In case of a minor accident, another student should accompany the injured child to the office. In more serious situations, a student should be sent to seek help.

## **Report Cards and Grades**

**\*Subject to change in the coming 2024-2025 school year.**

St. Charles uses a 1-4or Advance to Minimal assessment system to report on student attainments necessary for learning and advancement to the next grade level.

Students at Holy Ghost are graded using letter grades, comments and progress reports.

*\*If a student requires a modified curriculum, his/her parents will be notified in advance and his/her report card will reflect this modification.*

HG GRADING SYSTEM		RANGE
A+ = 100	C+ = 78-79	A = 90-100
A = 93-99	C = 73-77	B = 80-89
A- = 90-92	C- = 70-72	C = 70-79
B+ = 88-89	D+ = 68-69	D = 60-69
B = 83-87	D = 63-67	U = 0-59
B- = 80-82	D- = 60-62	
U = 0-59		

## **Safety at our Schools**

It is our responsibility to provide a safe learning environment for everyone in our building. Children come to us with rights that need to be respected. Most children act responsibly, which allows for optimum learning. We will always recognize responsible, respectful behavior.

Parental support and follow-up will assist us in providing a safe school environment and in teaching students to be respectful. Remember, we all have the same goal - SUCCESS FOR EVERY CHILD!

Our school doors will remain locked throughout the school day. Anyone wishing to enter our elementary buildings may ring the doorbell for entry and sign in at the office.

## **HG Safety Patrols**

Fifth grade students have the opportunity to be trained and serve on the Safety Patrol under the direction of a staff advisor. It is the responsibility of the safety patrols to assist students after school with crossing streets and boarding buses safely. Listed below are some of the expectations that are taken into consideration when selecting safety patrol students.

- Shows responsibility by making sure his/her homework is in on time
- Shows responsibility by having his/her planner signed regularly by a parent/guardian
- Is prepared to begin his/her school day
- Report card shows significant strength in personal development
- Follows school rules
- Has consistent attendance
- Is courteous, respectful and kind to others at all times



## **HG Student Council**

At Holy Ghost School, the Student Council is a service-based group that focuses on providing learning and leadership opportunities for grades 3-5 students. Council members campaign for office and are elected by their peers. A fifth grade president and fourth grade vice president are chosen and a representative from each homeroom is elected to represent their classmates. The council plans school activities, community service projects and much more!

# FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

## **Communication**

Good communication between MACS staff and families is one of the most important elements of our success as a learning center. In order to ensure that you receive all vital information from school, we will use various vehicles of communication:

- FACTS
- Our website at [www.McDonellAreaCatholicSchools.org](http://www.McDonellAreaCatholicSchools.org)
- Parent Blast sent out by Central Office weekly
- Weekly emails sent out by administrators with building information and announcements
- Teachers send out weekly information pertaining to their classroom.

Successful communication needs to go both ways. We are partners in the education of your children and welcome your ideas, questions, thoughts and concerns.

If you have concerns that you would like addressed by a particular staff member, you should feel free to make an appointment to see that person. All staff members have voicemail where you can leave a message if they are unavailable when you call. Of course, our principal is always willing to address any concerns that you have, too. If your concerns require further attention, our MACS president followed by the area dean and ultimately the Diocese of La Crosse are options per the administrative recourse process.

## **Faith Binders/School Folders**

Every student in grades K-5 has a daily take home folder or faith binder (Kindergarten). Students in grades 2 to 5 also will receive a student planner. The use of these materials provides families and teachers the opportunity to communicate on a daily basis.

Students should bring their folders and student planners with them to school every day and take them home every night so that parents and guardians can look over completed assignments, read informational notes and announcements, sign important papers and sign their name in the appropriate spot to indicate that work has been reviewed. Teachers will check folders and planners daily and read any notes that families have attached.

## **Family Contact Changes**

It is very important for the school office to have current student data on every child. Please inform the office whenever you have a change of telephone number, address, place of employment, etc. Families may update such information themselves in their Infinite Campus parent portal as well. Please inform the school office of any changes.

## **Home and School Association (HandS)**

Our Home and School Association is an organization for McDonell Area Catholic Schools parents that supports teachers and families by assisting them in fulfilling their responsibilities in the Christian formation of their child. All parents, guardians, and staff are encouraged to become involved in HandS by attending quarterly meetings and volunteering to help with the numerous opportunities that build community relationships and support our students' education. It is through the Home and School efforts that our students enjoy such activities as the Harvest Hoedown celebration, the Annual Snowflake Dance, family game nights and such things as an author visit during Catholic Schools Week. The St. Charles/Holy Ghost "The Little MACS" yearbook is designed by our HandS parents. They will be available in the spring. HandS also awards "Make It Happen" grants to faculty members and supports teacher appreciation events.

### **MACS Athletic Boosters**

MACS Athletic Boosters is for all parents of athletes in grades 5-12. Parents are encouraged to come to monthly meetings (second Wednesday of every month at 6:00 p.m. in the McDonell Library) and are welcome to run for elected positions. This organization has fundraisers to help pay for uniforms, coaches' salaries, equipment, referees and capital improvements. Fundraisers include candy bar sales and running concession stands during home games at Holy Ghost School. All parents are expected to work the concession stand when their child is playing a game at Holy Ghost. These duties will be assigned by the coaches and/or a team parent.

### **MACS Faith Boosters**

MACS Faith Boosters' mission is to support the faith formation efforts of MACS families and MACS staff. Our goal is to underpin endeavors that foster an environment in which all MACS staff, students, parents, and stakeholders can grow in the practice and application of their Christian and in particular Catholic Faith. All families and staff of MACS are members. Please reach out to our campus ministry at the high school for more information.

### **MACS Fine Arts Boosters**

This organization supports all of the music and fine arts programs at MACS. All parents in grades K-8 are considered members of the Music Booster Club (as music is a mandatory part of the school curriculum) in addition to parents with students in the high school band and choir. This group meets on the second Monday of every month at 6:00 p.m. at McDonell High School to discuss fundraisers, where to spend the money and any other issues. The main fundraisers for this group are the concession sales during football and track meets and the craft shows in fall and spring.

### **Lost and Found**

Each year the number of articles "found" is much larger than the number of items claimed. Our "Lost and Found" items will be located near the school office. Your children should be encouraged to check this table if they have lost something. Small valuables such as watches and jewelry will be kept in the school office. The labeling of clothing and possessions is helpful in returning lost items to the rightful owner. All unclaimed Lost and Found items will be donated to a charity when the table gets full and after parents have been notified.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

Parent-Teacher Conferences are held once in the fall and, if the teacher or parents sees a need, in the spring. Parents will be sent a link on Sign-Up Genisus to sign up for your child(rens) conference. The staff makes every effort to accommodate busy family schedules. We expect that at least one parent/guardian will attend their child's conference. At Holy Ghost, the students are expected to attend. Additional Parent-Teacher Conferences may be held throughout the school year if warranted. A conference will be requested if your child is struggling to maintain grade level work or the student has some behavioral concerns. Parents or guardians may also request a conference with their child's teacher at any time if they have any concerns. We believe that scheduled time to share information and discuss a student's progress proves valuable to both the teacher and the family, and also reinforces to our students that schools and families work together.

## **Student Transportation**

If you meet the district requirements for busing, and have not received any busing information such as bus numbers and pick up/drop off locations, please contact the bus company (715-726-2454). If you have students at both St. Charles and Holy Ghost, please go directly from one school to the other.

### ● **Arrivals and Departure for St. Charles Preschool and Primary Students**

- Bussing for grades K-2 is provided five days per week. Students who ride a bus for Little Macks 4K will be transported on the same bus routes as Chippewa District 4K on Monday - Thursday only, with morning and afternoon routes. St. Charles is the district's 4K bus hub so your student will be transported directly from your home to school and back again. On Fridays, Little Macks 4K parents must self-transport their children. No bus is available for Little Macks 3K.
- All students who ride a bus to school and attend St. Charles School are dropped off in front of the building on Spruce Street each morning. A staff member will be at the door to greet all students and families as they arrive between 7:20 and 7:40 a.m. (or per the 4K bussing schedule for morning and afternoon).
- Parents who drive their students to school are asked to park and walk in with their students to ensure their safety. Parents may park on either side of Spruce Street, except in the bus zone. **PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE BUS ZONE EVEN FOR A SHORT MOMENT!** At the end of a school day, students riding a bus are picked up in front of St. Charles. If your child is riding home with you, parents are asked to enter the Pearl Street entrance and drive behind and around the school. Your child will be dismissed by staff members through the side door of St. Charles School between the playground and the school building (three or four students at a time).

### ● **Arrivals and Departures for Holy Ghost Students**

- Students who ride a bus to and from Holy Ghost School are dropped off and picked up on Greenville Street. **PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE BUS ZONE EVEN FOR A SHORT MOMENT.** A staff member will be at the door to greet students and families as they arrive from 7:20-7:40 a.m.
- Parents who drop off or pick up their students at Holy Ghost School are asked to enter the playground/parking lot through the opening furthest from the school door and exit using the opening closest to the school door. Parents will be driving in a horseshoe shape. In the morning, parents may stop by the back door and drop off their child without exiting their car. If a parent wishes to come into school, they should park on the street in front of the school or along Greenville Street.
- In the afternoon, parents are asked to park in the parking lot facing the school and remain in your car. This will make it easy for vehicles to exit using the opening closest to the school door. Students riding with parents/guardians will be dismissed to come to your car once the afternoon buses have departed.

## **Bus Supervision**

School personnel will supervise students waiting for buses. Supervision on board the buses is the responsibility of the bus company. Riding the bus is a privilege. Parents will be notified by the bus company, if a child's behavior is unacceptable. All students will have an opportunity to meet with the bus company staff to review the PBIS model (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) and expectations for riding the Chippewa Yellow Buses at the beginning of the school year.

## **After School Walkers**

The school will release the child at 2:30 pm. Once the child leaves the school grounds, the school is not responsible. We recommend an adult meeting the child either at the edge of the school property.