

2026 - 2027

St. Charles Preschool & Primary School & Afterschool Program

(Little Macks 3K - Grade 2)

Holy Ghost Elementary School

(Grades 3 - 6)

Handbook



**MCDONELL AREA
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**
— Est. 1882 —

St. Charles Borromeo Primary School, Holy Ghost Elementary School & Little Macks Preschool is a Catholic School in the Diocese of La Crosse. As a Catholic School we will teach and advocate our Catholic Faith. All students are welcome in our school, 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)

Rev 7/30/26

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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

Centered on Jesus Christ and His Church, we partner with families to nurture young people's spiritual, intellectual, physical, and moral formation through a PreK-12 Catholic liberal arts education and vibrant student life of discipleship, athletics, and the arts.

Our Vision

MACS will be a beacon of faith, hope, and love by inspiring each student to embrace his or her identity as a beloved son or daughter of God, while discovering and developing their unique gifts. We will immerse students and families in an authentic Catholic culture which fosters love of truth, beauty, and goodness. We will challenge all students to pursue academic excellence, critical thinking, and intellectual inquiry. We will prepare McDonell graduates to be a transforming force within society, sharing the Gospel and working for the common good as productive, virtuous citizens.

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)

Build a personal relationship with God through prayer, the Sacraments, and the Eucharist.

Listen for God's voice in Scripture, creation, and Church teaching.

Live out my Catholic faith in all areas of life, seeking God's will for my vocation.

HONOR

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

Let Christ guide all my actions and decisions.

Treat others with fairness, respect, and integrity.

Use my freedom to choose what is right, good, and beautiful.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

"Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious... think about these things." (Philippians 4:8)

Pursue truth with courage and commitment.

Set high goals and strive for personal excellence.

HEALTHY LIVING

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...?" (1 Corinthians 6:19)

Take care of my body through healthy habits and self-discipline.

Focus on what I can improve and keep a positive outlook.

COMMUNITY

"For just as the body is one and has many members... so it is with Christ." (1 Corinthians 12:12)

Respect and care for others through empathy, forgiveness, and kindness.

Communicate with honesty, patience, and charity.

Be involved, inclusive, and supportive of all God's people.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

"The Son of Man has come not to be served, but to serve..." (Matthew 20:28)

Serve others with humility, compassion, and a listening heart.

Take responsibility, admit mistakes, and strive for understanding.

Work with enthusiasm and help others grow.

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 & Holy Ghost Elementary K-6 school offices are open from **7:00 a.m. to 3:15 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. Mai ----- St Charles Principal
Mrs. Gwen Doyle ----- Holy Ghost Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Gawinski ----- St. Charles Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Julie Yohnk ----- Holy Ghost Administrative Assistant
TBD ----- 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 3-6: Monday-Friday 7:20 a.m. - 2:30 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 2:35 p.m. from Holy Ghost. 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-6 (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.

St. Charles and Holy Ghost School Faculty and Staff 2026-2027

Mrs. Megan Mai, St Charles Preschool & Primary School Principal

Mrs. Gwen Doyle, Holy Ghost Elementary School Principal

St. Charles Staff		Holy Ghost Staff	
Mrs. Jenniffer Gawinski	Administrative Assistant (Pre-2)	Mrs. Julie Yonk	Administrative Assistant (3-6)
TBD	Afterschool Administrative Assistant	Mrs. Barb Eckwright	Third Grade Teacher
Ms. Theresia Mrasek-Treleven	3K Teacher	Ms. Amber Atchison	Third Grade Teacher
Ms. Hillary Swoboda	3K Para	Mrs. Deb Dahl	Fourth Grade Teacher
Mrs. Angela Steinmetz	4K Teacher	Mrs. Bridget Ericksen	Fourth Grade Teacher
Mrs. Morgan Exner	4K Para	Mr. Robert Teuteberg	Fifth Grade Teacher
Mr. Matt Rose	4K Para & Afterschool Supers Teacher	Miss Belinda Loew	Fifth Grade Teacher
Mrs. Krista Misener	Kindergarten Teacher	Mrs. Kendra Rogers	Sixth Grade Teacher
Mrs. Emily Dunham	Kindergarten Teacher	Ms. Kamryn Hoecherl	Sixth Grade Teacher
Mrs. Kelsey Sobieck	Kindergarten Teacher	Mrs. Kristin Renneke	Student Support Services Lead
Mrs. Samantha Jandourek	First Grade Teacher	TBD	Student Support Services Assistant
Mrs. Shelbie Walker	First Grade Teacher	Mrs. Cory Kinnick	Cook
Mrs. Beth Drake	Second Grade Teacher	Elizabeth Blum	Kitchen Help
Mrs. Vanessa Talford	Second Grade Teacher	Mr. Robert Kinnick	Custodian
		Shared Specialist Teacher	
Ms. Mariah Hanson	Student Support Services Lead	Mrs. Rebecca Beaubeaux	SC- Art & Music / 3K - Music HG - Art
Mrs. Jenna Hoglund	Student Support Services Assistant	Mrs. Valerie Siegenthaler	PE
Mrs. Kassandra Klinkhammer	Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Leader	Mrs. Caitlin McElroy	School Counselor & Guidance Teacher
Ms. Alysia Steiger	Cook & Afterschool Float	Mrs. Kimberly Schulze	HG Band & Choir
Ms. Samantha Englert	Cook	Mrs. Erin Brick	HG - Music
TBD	Cook		
	Custodian		
Mr. Tim Hobart	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.
 - Willing to be in underwear.
- **Guidelines for determining when a child is not toilet trained:**
 - If the child has 6 or more accidents, either poop or pee, within 1 week
- 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 or classroom. 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.

Child Illness Policy

On the average, children experience six to eight illnesses a year. We know that managing the demands of work can be challenging when your child is ill. We strive to limit the spread of communicable disease in our schools and are committed to implementing policies that balance and respect the needs of children, families, and staff in these circumstances.

Our Child Illness Policy is based on the Model Health Care Policies developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

SC/HG understands that it is difficult for a parent/guardian to leave or miss work; therefore, it is suggested that alternative arrangements be made for occasions when children must remain at home or be picked up due to illness. Exclusion from the school is sometimes necessary either to reduce the transmission of illness or because the school is not able to adequately meet the needs of the child. Mild illnesses are common among children, and infections are often spread before the onset of any symptoms. In these cases, we try to keep the children comfortable throughout the day. Reasons for SC/HG to call parents to come and pick up their children include (but are not limited to) the following:

- **General Illness:** If the child is too sick to participate in normal activities or needs more care than staff can provide without affecting others' safety.
- **Fever:** 100°F or higher with symptoms or behavior changes
104°F or higher at any age – needs immediate attention
- **Vomiting:** Vomiting within the past 24 hours unless cleared by a doctor
- **Diarrhea**
- **Rashes or Skin Issues:**
 - Rash with fever or behavior changes (unless cleared by a doctor)
 - Open sores that can't be covered
- **Eye Infections:** Pink eye with pus (can return after 24 hours on antibiotics)
- **Other Infections** (may return after 24 hours on treatment unless noted):
 - Strep throat
 - Impetigo
 - Head lice or nits (please see below under head lice procedures)
 - Scabies
 - Chickenpox (after lesions are dried/crusted)
 - Rubella, Mumps, Measles (after required exclusion periods)
 - Whooping cough (after 5 days on antibiotics)
 - Hepatitis A (1 week after onset or as directed by the health department)
 - Tuberculosis (requires clearance by doctor or health department)
- **Abdominal Pain:** Ongoing for more than 2 hours, or with fever or other symptoms
- **Other:** Any condition deemed contagious or concerning by a medical provider or local health department

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	
Grades 6 through 12	4 DTP/DTaP/DT/Td	1 Tdap	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 at St. Charles are scheduled to take place in the fall of each school year. At Holy Ghost, only vision screenings will be conducted during the fall.

Student Injury – Broken Bones & Mobility Limitations

At MACS, student safety and well-being are our highest priorities. When a student sustains a broken bone or injury that limits mobility, we work collaboratively with parents to provide reasonable accommodations while maintaining a safe environment for all.

Because our school building includes multiple staircases and does not have elevator access, certain temporary adjustments may be necessary.

Parent Responsibilities

- Notify the school office as soon as possible of the injury.
- Provide written medical documentation outlining restrictions (e.g., non-weight bearing, limited use of arm, no stairs, no PE, etc.).
- Inform the school of any updates or changes to medical restrictions.

School Accommodations May Include:

Depending on the injury and physician guidance, the school may:

- Provide assistance with carrying books and materials.
- Adjust classroom locations when feasible.
- Allow early dismissal from class to avoid crowded hallways.
- Modify physical education, recess, and extracurricular participation.
- Provide an alternative workspace if writing or mobility is limited.
- Arrange a temporary buddy system for transitions.
- Develop a short-term accommodation plan in collaboration with parents and teachers.

Stair Safety

Due to the number of stairs in our building:

- Students who are non-weight bearing or unable to safely navigate stairs independently may require parent assistance during arrival, dismissal, and/or class transitions.
- In some cases, families may be asked to escort students between floors if safe navigation cannot be reasonably ensured by staff.
- The administration will determine whether in-person attendance is safe or whether temporary alternative arrangements are necessary.

Attendance Considerations

If a student's mobility restrictions make safe navigation of the building impossible, families may:

- Coordinate short-term homebound instruction when appropriate, or
- Work with teachers to receive assignments during recovery.

Our goal is to support healing while maintaining a safe environment for the student and the school community. Each situation will be reviewed individually, and accommodations will be determined based on medical guidance and building limitations.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Admissions Policy & Procedure

New Families

New Families will be asked to contact the school Enrollment Director to schedule a tour and interview with the administrator. The 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).

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 years old by September 1st to enter Little Macks 3K, 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. Administration and teachers work together to ensure every child is in an educational environment where their academic, social and emotional needs can best be met. We do not accept formal parent teacher requests.

At MACS, we recognize that grade placement is a critical factor in a student's academic and social development. Advancing a student to the next grade level before they are fully prepared may result in educational gaps and challenges in peer interactions. Similarly, retaining a student for an additional year can present its own set of difficulties. Given the significance of these decisions, MACS carefully evaluates grade-level promotion and retention. Comprehensive assessments and data collection will be conducted to ensure an informed decision is made in collaboration with parents. If you have any concerns regarding your child's grade placement, please contact the school administration for further discussion.

Grades 4K - 6 Attendance and Truancy Policy

Regular school attendance is crucial for your child's success and is required by the state of Wisconsin. We encourage families to plan appointments and vacations around the school calendar whenever possible. Consistent attendance helps children engage more fully in their learning, leading to a more enjoyable and successful school experience. Additionally, fostering good attendance habits builds lifelong skills of responsibility and self-discipline. Thank you for supporting your child's daily 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 instructional day for 3K-2 begins promptly at 7:40 a.m., and for grades 3-6, it begins at 7:35 a.m. Students are considered tardy if they are not in the building by these times. If a student arrives after the start of the school day, parents must escort their child to the office and sign them in. If your child will be tardy or absent, please email or call the school prior to the beginning of the school day.

When you call or email, 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

If a student has a few absences during the year, we will accommodate special events for taking a child out of school. However, excessive absences or tardies may result in a truancy referral. **Vacations during the school year** should be planned around the school calendar, and work will **not be provided ahead of time** for such absences.

Excused Absences

Absences will be excused for the following reasons:

- Illness or contagious conditions. The School Leader may require a doctor's statement. A doctor's statement of illness must be presented if a student is absent more than three consecutive days or more than 7 absences during a trimester.
- Medical appointments (that cannot be scheduled after school hours)
- Death in the family
- Religious holidays
- Family emergencies (e.g., serious illness of another family member)
- Unique learning experiences outside of school

To report an absence, parents/guardians must:

- **Email** the administrative assistant, or
- **Call the school office** (St. Charles: 715-723-5827; Holy Ghost: 715-723-6478)
- The absence must be reported **before the start of the school day**.

Absence Limits, Monitoring & Notification

- Per Wisconsin State Statute 118.16, habitually truant is defined as **5 or more absences** per semester;
 - Semester 1: August 26th, 2025 to January 16, 2026
 - Semester 2: January 19, 2026 to May 29, 2026
- After **5 unplanned absences** in a semester, the administrator will email parents/guardians.
- After **10 unplanned absences**, a **doctor's note** will be required. The administrator will call parent/guardians and send a letter. During the call a meeting with the administrator will be set to go over a plan and discuss possible referral to Chippewa County Juvenile Services for violation of Wisconsin's Compulsory Attendance Law.

Tardies

Our instructional day for 3K-2 begins promptly at 7:40 a.m., and for grades 3-5, it begins at 7:35 a.m. Students are considered tardy if they are not in the building by these times. If a student arrives after the start of the school day, parents must escort their child to the office and sign them in. If your child will be tardy or absent, please email or call the school prior to the beginning of the school day.

- Per Wisconsin State Statute 118.16, habitually truant is defined as **5 or more absences** per semester;
 - Semester 1: August 26th, 2025 to January 16, 2026
 - Semester 2: January 19, 2026 to May 29, 2026
- After **5 tardies** in a semester, the administrator will email parents/guardians.
- After **10 tardies**, The administrator will call parent/guardians and send a letter. During the call a meeting with the administrator will be set to go over a plan and discuss possible referral to Chippewa County Juvenile Services for violation of Wisconsin's Compulsory Attendance Law.

Dropping Off Late and Picking Up Early Policy

If your child is arriving at school after the beginning of the school day, a parent or guardian will need to bring their child into the building and sign them in at the office.

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.

Emergency School Closings Procedure

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 Policy

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 Policy

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.

Behavior Philosophy, Policy and Procedures

At McDonell Area Catholic Schools (MACS), our behavior and discipline policy is rooted in forming habits of faith, accountability, self-control, love, and respect. We believe discipline is part of formation — helping students grow in virtue and responsibility as children of God.

We follow principles consistent with **Love and Logic**, which emphasize strong relationships, shared responsibility, and learning from experience. Adults respond to student behavior with calmness and empathy, while maintaining clear and consistent expectations. When possible, students are given appropriate choices and allowed to experience logical consequences so they can learn responsibility and good decision-making in a supportive environment.

Families hold the primary responsibility for educating their children. MACS partners closely with families to educate, inspire, and support students as they grow into the person God created them to be. Consistent communication and collaboration between home and school are essential.

Students are expected to:

- Show respect for appropriate authority
- Treat others with dignity and courtesy
- Put forth diligent effort in completing assigned work
- Accept responsibility for their choices

Teachers are responsible for cultivating classrooms marked by love, respect, and joy:

- **Love** honors the dignity of every person through care, kindness, and firm guidance — not permissiveness.
- **Respect** is demonstrated in words, actions, and attitudes toward oneself and others.
- **Joy** is the sense of well-being that comes from meaningful growth, even through challenge.

When challenges arise, we respond with empathy first, seeking to understand before correcting. Consequences are designed to teach rather than punish, helping students reflect, repair harm when needed, and grow in virtue.

Exclusivity, cliques, and favoritism are inconsistent with our mission. We promote inclusion, graciousness, and mutual respect within our school community at all times.

Our goal is not merely compliance, but the formation of students who choose what is good, true, and beautiful — even when no one is watching.

Bullying Policy and Procedures

McDonell Area Catholic Schools are committed to providing a safe, Christ-centered environment where every student is treated with dignity. In keeping with our Catholic faith and the virtues outlined in Galatians 5:22–23 — love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control — bullying is not tolerated.

A student shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words, actions, or social behavior. Bullying includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical aggression (hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking)
- Verbal harassment (teasing, name-calling, threats, swearing)
- Social exclusion or intentional humiliation
- Written or digital harassment

All incidents of bullying will be addressed according to the school's **Four-Tier Behavioral System** outlined at the conclusion of this policy.

- Isolated or impulsive behaviors may be addressed at the **Minor Behavioral Habit** level.
- Repeated patterns of bullying behavior will be addressed as a **Repeated Behavioral Act** and will involve parent communication and consequences.
- Intentional, aggressive, or escalated behaviors will be classified as a **Deliberate Act** and addressed by administration.
- Severe, harmful, or ongoing bullying — especially involving violence, threats, or serious moral misconduct — will be treated as a **Morally Disobedient Act**, which may result in suspension, probation, or dismissal.

Our goal is not simply to punish wrongdoing, but to form students in responsibility, empathy, and virtue. When appropriate, restorative practices, logical consequences, and parent partnership will be used to promote growth and repair harm.

Behavioral Virtues

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

<u>RESPECT</u> <i>"How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity."</i>	• Showing and acting in a manner that will accept all people's wellbeing. • Welcoming and caring for all of God's creations. • Using good manners, and doing your best in class. • Respect for God's People ○ Students are to treat others with kindness, respect and generosity. ○ Students are expected to show appropriate regard for all school property.
<u>PRUDENCE</u> <i>"God made our brains to form positive habits automatically through repetition"</i>	• Showing positive behavior that becomes natural and is repeated regularly. • Putting forth a worthy effort to give full attention and to carefully complete all assigned tasks.
<u>LOVE</u> <i>"Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them"</i>	• Showing a genuine concern for the good of others, with selfless acts of kindness
<u>SELF-CONTROL</u> <i>"For the spirit of God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."</i>	• Resisting and avoiding impulses • Responding to do what God asks of you • Action through 100% effort

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.

***Parents will be contacted about repeated behavior; student loses privileges or has a consequence that matches the habit. For Repeated Behavioral Acts and beyond, students may be assigned tasks within the school building as a consequence. These may include cleaning, organizing materials, assisting in maintaining common areas, or other housekeeping responsibilities. This approach reinforces accountability while fostering a sense of responsibility for their learning environment and replaces the non-virtuous 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-previewed 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 6th

- **Pants:** Students may wear solid black, gray, navy blue or khaki dress pants. No joggers, cargo pants or leggings. **Joggers** are athletic-style pants that are typically made of soft, stretchy material, often featuring an elastic waistband, tapered legs, and fitted cuffs at the ankles. **Leggings and biker shorts are only permitted under skirts or dresses at all times, including out-of-uniform days.**
- **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. **Crocs are not permitted.**
- **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 6th**
 - Solid black, gray, navy blue or khaki dress shorts (no jeans or athletics 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.
 - At St. Charles, sandals are not part of the dress code. These can be worn at Holy Ghost during shorts season. Students should wear athletic shoes on Phy-Ed days.
 - Students will not be allowed to change into/out of shorts during the school day.

Physical Education

4K to 6th

- 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 grades 5-6 only**, modest clothing for Phy-Ed consists of t-shirts and long shorts or sweatpants. Socks and athletic shoes are required. Infractions are as follows:
 - 1) Parents will be notified if a student forgets their clothes the first time.
 - 2) The second time, the principal will email the parents.
 - 3) The third time a student forgets their PE clothes in a trimester, a phone call will be made.
 - Being prepared for class counts for part of the Phy-Ed grade for students in grades 5-6.

Jeans/MACS Spirit Wear Fridays

4K to 6th

- 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 6th

- 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 or 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 6th

- **Makeup may only be worn for special events.**
- Headbands are allowed.
- Hair color must be natural or can be colored black, brown, or blonde, and free of tinsel and beads.

Dress Code Infractions

- **Holy Ghost:**
 - If a student is out of dress code, they will either be asked to find something in the uniform closet, or to not wear that clothing again.
- **St. Charles:**
 - The first time a student is out of dress code, a parent will be emailed or notified by the teacher.
 - The second time a student is out of dress code, the parent will be contacted. Students will be asked to change.

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

If families pay more than what the field trip costs, the money will be put toward the students' account. All school payments (such as hot lunch, library books, etc.) must be paid prior to the end of the school year.

Field Trip Policy

Throughout the year, students may leave campus for educational field trips. Parents/guardians of students in 3K–5th grade must sign a general permission form allowing their child to leave school grounds. Families will receive written notice prior to each trip. Students are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior while representing our school.

Parents who have completed Diocesan Safe Environment requirements and received diocesan approval may volunteer to chaperone. Please contact the MACS Central Office annually to ensure compliance. Chaperones are responsible for supervising an assigned group of students. We encourage parents to make alternate arrangements for younger siblings. Participation may be limited based on the nature of the trip.

Field trips are part of the curriculum, and student attendance is strongly encouraged. If a student does not attend a trip that takes place during the full school day, the school may not be able to provide on-campus supervision. Families should plan accordingly.

Grants

Grants are an important part of the McDonell Area Catholic School system's budget and help fund projects, programs, and everyday needs. These can be annual, bi-annual, quarterly, or single-application grants. The Advancement Department regularly applies for available grants. If you find a grant you think MACS could qualify for, please send the information to advancement@macs.k12.wi.us.

Advancement & Fundraising

Advancement and fundraising are key to both the day-to-day and long-term success of McDonell Area Catholic Schools. Properly managing fundraising is vital to avoid legal issues and to protect the financial health of the school system. Our primary system fundraisers include the A. B. McDonell Vision Fund (Annual Fund Drive), the Spaghetti Spectacular—held on the last Sunday in January to kick off Catholic Schools Week—the Spring Spectacular, and the Scrip program. Families are encouraged to complete some of their required 30 volunteer hours by participating in these events.

The Scrip gift card program helps offset student tuition costs while providing essential funding for McDonell Area Catholic Schools. Parents, family members, friends, and supporters are encouraged to regularly purchase gift cards from both local and national retailers.

To learn more about our fundraisers, please visit the “Support MACS” section of our website.

Our Fundraising Policy ensures that fundraising efforts are well-organized and aligned with the school's mission and goals. It aims to:

- Streamline fundraising efforts.
- Build and maintain positive relationships with donors.
- Provide oversight while encouraging creativity.
- Support both new and ongoing programs.

Fundraising Guidelines:

- All fundraising activities must be approved by the MACS Advancement Director and the President.
- Fundraising includes any activity that seeks donations, whether through selling items or requesting contributions. It applies to events led by students, parents, or staff.
- To request approval for a fundraiser, work with your principal or Parent Group Chair to submit the **MACS Fundraising Request Form** with details including the purpose, method, target audience, date, budget, and revenue goals.
- All funds raised must be used as advertised, and no other MACS staff or volunteers are authorized to sign contracts related to fundraising, except for the President or Dean.

Additional Guidelines for Fundraising:

- Funds raised for outside organizations must also be approved by MACS administration.
- All money collected must be sent to the MACS Central Office for deposit, and receipts must be maintained locally.
- Any agreements or contracts related to fundraising must be reviewed and pre-approved by the Diocesan Office for Temporalities (allow 5-10 business days).

Administrative Roles:

- **Advancement Director:** Oversees system-level fundraising events, such as the Spaghetti Spectacular and Annual Fund campaigns.
- **Principal:** Manages fundraising for Home and School Associations, student clubs, and parent groups.
- **Athletic and Activities Director:** Manages fundraising for the Booster Club, along with faculty for related areas like Fine Arts or Faith Boosters.

For any questions or assistance regarding fundraising, contact the MACS Director of Advancement or President.

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 program.

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 will have CGS once a week. Little Macks 4K will attend Mass monthly after October. 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

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.

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 directly through the photographer. The pictures will also be published in the yearbook in the spring.

Homework

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

3K-K Grade	No Homework	3rd Grade	30 minutes total
1st Grade	10 minutes total	4th Grade	40 minutes total
2nd Grade	20 minutes total	5th-6th Grade	50-60 minutes total

We believe that when parents, students and teachers work together, students learn more. 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 a lunch account set up online with FACTS where payments can be deposited at any time.

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, except for birthdays and special occasions. 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.

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". 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

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

St. Charles uses a narrative report card. A narrative report card includes several key features that provide a comprehensive assessment of a student's performance. Teachers write personalized comments highlighting each student's strengths, weaknesses, and progress instead of assigning letter grades. Each subject has its own section where teachers evaluate academic skills, participation, and behavior. This approach focuses on the whole child, considering academic, social, emotional, and behavioral development. Additionally, teachers

may suggest areas for improvement and set goals for the next term, fostering parent engagement through meaningful discussions about the child's progress. The benefits of a narrative report card include individualized feedback that offers detailed insights into a student's abilities, a focus on growth that emphasizes learning and improvement over competition, and encouragement for students to reflect on their learning and set personal goals.

Students at Holy Ghost are graded (see chart) using letter grades, comments and progress reports. Attainments students are working on are listed on each assignment in FACTS for 3rd - 6th grade.

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

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 time.



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 and community service projects, gives tours, speaks at Terrific Tuesday assemblies 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
- Parent Blast sent out by Central Office weekly
- Weekly emails sent out by administrators with building information and announcements
- Teachers newsletters

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-6 has a daily take home folder or faith binder (Kindergarten). Students in grades 2 to 6 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 4-12. 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 as needed in the winter & spring. Parents will be sent a link on Sign-Up Genius 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 qualify for district busing and have not received route information, please contact the bus company at 715-726-2454. Families with students at both campuses should travel directly between schools.

St. Charles Preschool & Primary (3K–2)

- Busing is available for K–2 five days per week.
- Little Macks 4K students are bused Monday–Thursday only (morning and afternoon routes). St. Charles serves as the district 4K bus hub. Parents must provide transportation for 4K on Fridays. No bus service is available for 3K.

Morning Arrival:

Bus students are dropped off on Spruce Street between 7:20–7:40 a.m. (or per 4K schedule). Staff greet students at the door. Parents who drive must park (not in the bus zone) and walk students in.

Afternoon Dismissal:

Bus students are picked up on Spruce Street. Parent pick-up enters from Pearl Street and drives behind the school. Students are dismissed from the side door between the playground and school building.

Please do not park in the bus zone at any time.

Holy Ghost (3–8)

- Bus drop-off and pick-up occur on Greenville Street. Staff greet students from 7:20–7:35 a.m. Do not park in the bus zone.

Parent Drop-Off/Pick-Up:

Enter the parking lot through the entrance furthest from the school door and exit at the closest entrance, forming a horseshoe pattern.

- Morning: Students may be dropped off at the back door without parents exiting the vehicle.
- Afternoon: Parents should park facing the school and remain in their vehicle. Students will be dismissed after buses depart.

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 or principal 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 for that student. We recommend an adult meeting the child at the edge of the school property.