

# St. Mary's School

Together we grow in **Faith, Hope and Love**

## VISION

St. Mary's School:

- †Reaches out to all who come to us.
- †Offers the promise of education.
- †Lives the example of Christ.

## MISSION

To provide a Catholic education that inspires students to learn, to work, to live fully, and to serve God in one another.

## FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

### †Faith

We cherish our Catholic tradition.  
We live our faith in word and action.  
*Your word is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path.*  
*(Psalm 119:105)*

### †Hope

We create learning opportunities for every child.  
We share the responsibility for the well-being of our children with family and community; it takes a village to raise a child.  
*I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.* *(John 10:10)*

### †Love

We value all people - created in the image and likeness of God.  
We celebrate the opportunity to love and serve others.  
*You are my child, the Beloved.* *(Mark 1:11)*

## OUR PATRON

*St. Mary, the Mother of God.*

The honour paid to Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus Christ our Lord and God, goes back to the earliest days of the Church. Indeed, it goes back further, for even before the birth of her Son, Mary prophesied, "From this time forth, all generations shall call me blessed".

Catholics throughout the world praise and honour Mary, our blessed Mother, through prayer and service.

The month of May is both named for and dedicated to Mary, the Mother of God, while October is dedicated to the Rosary. Mary's birthday is celebrated on September 8. The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on December 8, while the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is observed on August 15.

Mary's statue stands at the entrance of our school to welcome all who enter and to protect all who leave.

*Hail Mary, Full of Grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.*

*Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

## HISTORY

January 10, 1958, marked the first meeting of the Board of the Yorkton Catholic School District, which established the youngest Catholic School District in Saskatchewan. Our school was named after St. Mary's Parochial School (1919-1959).

Together with our twin school, St. Alphonsus, construction began in August of 1958 and was completed sufficiently for school opening in September of 1959. The cost of St. Mary's project at the time was approximately \$100 000.

September 1, 1959, marked the first day of classes. The enrolment was 171 students in grades 1-8. November 15, 1959, marked the Solemn Blessing and Official Opening.

In 1963, there was an addition of 350 square metres. In 1968, there was a second addition of 300 square metres.

The 1969-70 school year saw St. Mary's become a grade 1-6 school. Then in 1970-71, St. Mary's enrolled its first Kindergarten class.

A larger renovation project began May 10, 1988, and was completed December 31, 1988, at a cost of \$1 314 659. This renovation included a mini-chapel and the school's first gymnasium.

Since the last addition to St. Mary's, two portable classrooms have also been built. The last one was added in 1998 at a cost of \$170 000.

In the fall of 2002, St. Mary's School was designated a "Community School" by the Saskatchewan Government. Program direction created the need for a community kitchen. This renovation project was completed in the spring of 2007.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

St. Mary's School functions on a six-day rotation schedule.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

8:55 – 10:30 a.m.	Instructional Time
10:30 – 10:45 a.m.	Recess
10:45 – 11:45 a.m.	Instructional Time
11:45 – 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 2:00 p.m.	Instructional Time
2:00 – 2:15 p.m.	Recess
2:15 – 3:20 p.m.	Instructional Time

## **NEWSLETTERS**

The newsletter is an important means of communication between the school and our families. The newsletter will be sent home with the youngest in each family.

## **PHONE CALLS**

The office telephone is often kept very busy with business calls. We encourage families to make all possible arrangements prior to the school day, as this alleviates the number of calls and messages that must be conveyed to students. *We thank you in advance for your support and assistance in this area!*

A student phone is available to students to make emergency arrangements. Students are required to obtain permission before accessing this phone.

## **ATTENDANCE AND CHILD SAFETY**

If your child will be absent, please contact the school between 8:00 and 8:45 a.m. so that teachers can be made aware of details.

If the school has not been informed of a student absence, the school will contact a parent/guardian.

## **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Students are expected to arrive at school between 8:45 and 8:55 a.m. Upon arrival, students are permitted to be in their classrooms or attending the *Breakfast for Learning* program in the kitchen (8:30 a.m.).

Upon dismissal, students are expected to go directly home or to the home of their caregivers. Students should wait for their rides at the front of the school.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY**

### *School Facility*

To ensure a safe learning environment we must take considerable measures to keep our building secure. *We are requesting that all visitors to our school enter through the main front entrance. It is also important that all visitors check-in at the main office.*

All school Exit doors are locked during class times, with the exception of the main front door. All entrance doors are unlocked during student breaks to provide quick access for use of school facilities and to assist with emergency situations.

### *Supervision*

School supervision by staff begins at 8:40 a.m. and ends after the last bus leaves the school at the end of the day. Supervision during recess and noon hour is provided by an adequate number of staff members at all times.

### *Emergency Procedures*

As a proactive measure for emergency conditions, we will conduct various evacuation and lock-down drills. This will provide students and staff the opportunity to build a calm, natural response to an emergency such as a fire.

## **PARKING/ SAFETY PATROL/ BUS**

- Parents and students are asked to use the crosswalks and follow the Safety Patrol's directions at all times.
- There is no parking, loading, or unloading, in the area along the sidewalk immediately in front of the school. The sidewalks should remain unobstructed at all times.
- Bussing: Students are required to conduct themselves in a quiet, courteous manner that shows consideration for other passengers and for the bus driver.

## **CITY BUS: CITY OF YORKTON BYLAW**

No person shall pass a School Bus, that has its safety lights and stop arms in operation, from either direction; and shall stop at least five (5) metres from the front or rear of the school bus, and shall not proceed until the operation of the school bus safety lights and stops arms have been discontinued. This provision shall apply in all areas of the city, outside of designated school zones.

## **BICYCLES/ ROLLERBLADES/ SKATEBOARDS/ SCOOTERS**

- Students may use their bicycles, rollerblades, skateboards, and scooters as transportation to and from school, but may not use this equipment for recreational activities at recess or lunch.
- Students are expected to walk their bikes on school property and to securely lock them in the designated area.
- Rollerblades should be removed before entering the school.
- The school will not be responsible for any lost or damaged equipment.

## **STUDENT POSSESSIONS**

- The presence of any personal electronic devices such as MP3 players, ipods or cellular phones which may be distracting from the school experience are not allowed. Any "special circumstances" must be addressed or discussed with school administration.
- We are not responsible for the loss of valuable items; these should not be brought to school.

## **LUNCH BREAK**

Students staying for lunch will be required to conform to expectations. Eating lunch at school is a privilege. All students are expected to eat at their own desks using polite manners and quiet conversation with classmates. Failure to do so may result in the loss of this privilege.

Students leaving the school property for lunch must have written/verbal parental permission presented to the homeroom teacher.

## **DRESS AND APPEARANCE**

In keeping with our Christian values, students are expected to dress in a modest and neat fashion. The following guidelines must be observed:

- Tops must be modest, cover the shoulder, and overlap the pants.
- Only clothing with positive messages and pictures is permitted.
- Hats and other forms of headwear are not to be worn inside the school.
- Outdoor wear (boots, coats, etc.) is not to be worn in the classroom.
- Choices of clothing or accessories that attract undue attention and distract from the learning environment should be avoided. This includes items such as: headbands, bandanas, chains, and excessive jewellery.

## **WEATHER CONDITIONS**

The following school division winter weather guidelines have been established. Temperatures noted include reported windchill factors:

- **Temperature of -29°C and above**  
Students are expected to be outdoors.
- **Temperature of -30°C to -35°C**  
Students have the option to stay indoors.
- **Temperature of -36°C and colder**  
Students must stay indoors.

Please ensure that your child/children are dressed appropriately.

## **MEDICATION**

SCHOOL POLICY regarding the administration of medication (over-the counter or prescription) requires the completion of an "*ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION*" form by a family physician and by a parent/ guardian. Forms are available at the school office.

## **STUDENT CONDUCT**

We expect students to behave in a Christian manner towards each other at all times. We expect children to respect each other and each other's property, to apply themselves diligently to their schoolwork and to apply the teachings of Jesus in their daily lives.

A focus of our school is to create an environment where children feel safe and can learn in a risk-free manner. To help assist us in our endeavours we will focus on pro-social skills. We will assist students in developing positive behaviours in our student population. The ultimate goal is to create students who are self-disciplined and reflective of their behaviours and their actions. The Gospel values of healing and forgiveness will guide us in seeing discipline as an opportunity to teach and nurture.

In managing student behaviour, teachers will deal with problems that may arise. In areas of more serious behaviour problems, there may be intervention by the school's administration. The school's administration will be guided by the Christ the Teacher Administrative Procedures and by the expectations outlined in The Education Act, 1995.

## **THREAT – RISK GUIDELINES**

The Christ the Teacher School Division requires that all threats be treated seriously. A **threat** is an expression of intent to do harm or act out violently against someone or something. It can be written, spoken or symbolic, such as a hand gesture. A "threat" may include words or actions to intimidate, intent to inflict harm, harass or bully other persons or damage property.

All "threats" will be assessed. The school Threat Assessment Team will determine the appropriate interventions and disciplinary actions to be taken. Please refer to school division administrative procedure AP 354 Threat Assessment Protocol for further information.

## **FAIR NOTICE LETTER**

The safety of our children is of top priority for all of us. We, the Good Spirit School Division and Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools, are involved in intensive safety training with our community partners. Together, we developed a plan for responding to high-risk behaviours. High-risk behaviours include, but are not limited to, possession of weapons, bomb threats and threats to injure oneself or others.

This letter is to inform you the GSSD/CTTCS school systems have a policy that requires principals to initiate a "threat assessment" in all cases of students displaying any type of high-risk behaviour. Should you wish to review the "Administrative Procedure 165: Safe Schools" or "Administrative Procedure 354: Threat Assessment", please visit our websites at either [www.gssd.ca](http://www.gssd.ca) or [www.christtheteacher.ca](http://www.christtheteacher.ca). The purpose of these assessments is to determine how best to support high-risk students so that their behaviour does not become hurtful or destructive. If your child comes home and tells you that a student has behaved in a threatening way at school, please advise your principal and be assured that your principal will be taking measures to deal with the situation in a positive and proactive manner. If your principal invites you to a meeting to discuss safety concerns about your own child, please be assured that the procedure is being followed and that the primary goal is safety, not punishment.

This letter is intended to serve our community with fair notice that we, as school communities, will not accept "no response" to a serious threat. Our goal is to respond to all threats in a professional manner that provides for a healthy and caring learning environment.

We are pleased to provide, in conjunction with our community partners, a safe environment for all of our students.

## **PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES**

St. Mary's School provides programming for students in Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8. In addition to offering the same high quality instruction and curriculum as other schools, St. Mary's School also provides a number of additional supports to enhance student learning. St. Mary's School focuses on four main areas: the Learning Program (instruction), Community Development, Parent and Community Involvement, and Supporting Integrated Services. St. Mary's School programs, such as the Nutrition Program assist the staff with accomplishing school goals and meeting the needs of all our students.

## **CURRICULUM**

St. Mary's School offers Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 8 English programming as determined by the Saskatchewan Ministry of Learning. Locally developed options include:

- Religion
- Band (Grade 5-8)
- Applied Arts Program (Grade 7-8 instruction occurs at Sacred Heart High School)

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

Religion is an integral part of the daily school routine at St. Mary's School, both in expression and instruction. All grades use the national Catechetical series, Born of the Spirit, supplemented by the Fully Alive family education program.

## **SACRAMENT PREPARATION**

St. Mary's School students have the opportunity to receive various Sacrament(s) through the Come Join Us at the Table parish/home based program. St. Gerard's Church offers the Sacraments of Confirmation, First Communion and Reconciliation. St. Mary's Church offer the Sacraments of First Solemn Holy Communion and Reconciliation.

## **PRAYER**

Prayer is an important part of daily school life. Classes have many opportunities to pray in their classrooms and at school assemblies. St. Mary's School regularly celebrates Masses and Liturgies with the priests from St. Gerard's Church and St. Mary's Church. Each day begins with prayer; grace is offered before lunch; each day ends with prayer.

## **PRE-KINDERGARTEN**

St. Mary's School offers a Pre-K program to families with children who are 3 and 4 years old. Major aims of the program are: to develop positive self-esteem, to develop speech and language skills, and to socially prepare the children for Kindergarten.

Families with children who are 3 and 4 years old are invited to complete an application form for the program. A selection process is in place to determine which students will qualify for the Pre-K program.

## **KINDERGARTEN**

St. Mary's School offers a Kindergarten for Enhanced Literacy program. To attain targeted outcomes, students attend either the even or odd days of the 6 day cycle of the school calendar.

## **SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAMS**

St. Mary's School is concerned about the safety and well being of our students and has implemented a number of preventative programs at each grade level which provide students with skills and strategies for coping with situations which may be encountered at school and in everyday life.

These programs include:

**Kindergarten – The Incredible Years**

**Grade 1 – The Incredible Years and C.A.R.E. (Challenge Abuse Through Respect Education)**

**Grade 2 & 3 – Second Step**

**Grade 4, 5 & 6 – Steps to Respect**

**Grade 6 – RespectEd – "Beyond the Hurt" (Bullying and Peer Harassment)**

**Grade 7 – RespectEd – “It’s Not Your Fault” (Abuse & Neglect)**  
**Grade 8 – RespectEd – “What’s Love Got To Do With It?” (Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships)**

## TECHNOLOGY

St. Mary's students have access to a fully equipped lab of computers, as well as to classroom computers. Student learning is enhanced through the implementation of the Christ the Teacher *Scope and Sequence*, which provides expectations for technological skills and applications at each grade level.

### *Internet Use*

Christ the Teacher Catholic School Division encourages the use of the internet as a valuable educational tool and resource. Students and parents/guardians are required to complete the *Electronic Information System Student Acceptable Use Policy Permission Form* before students are granted permission to access the Internet.

## OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Christ the Teacher Catholic Schools have developed an extensive outdoor educational program, with each grade targeting specific learning outcomes to enhance the regular instructional programs. Activities at each grade level include:

**Grade 4:** Swimming - Water Safety (Yorkton Gallagher Centre)  
**Grade 5:** Ecological Nature Hike - Ecological Study  
**Grade 6:** Good Spirit Sand Dune Hike  
**Grade 6 & 8:** Downhill Ski Instruction  
**Grade 7:** Overnight Canoe/ Camp Skills Training (York Lake Provincial Park)  
**Grade 7:** AMPO – Christ the Teacher One-Week Camp Program (Duck Mountain Provincial Park - Madge Lake)  
**Grade 8:** Overnight Cross Country Ski Excursion (Good Spirit Lake Provincial Park)

## MEASURES OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS

Assessment results ensure that schools, parents and other stakeholders in our communities have access to high-quality information needed to make informed judgments and effective educational decisions. Schools continuously collect assessment data on student learning to plan for student growth. Teachers assess knowledge, skills and strategies on an ongoing basis. Regular assessments, both classroom and large scale, allow teachers to determine the effectiveness of their instruction, assess student learning, and make informed decisions about how to organize and pace instruction.

St. Mary's School will be implementing the Christ the Teacher *Learning Assessment Schedule*. To view the provincial and division assessments by grade level, refer to [www.christtheteacher.ca](http://www.christtheteacher.ca)

## STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS

Students will no longer receive a percentage grade. Percentage grades and letter grades tied to a percentage scale are meant to rank students. At this point in their life, that is, from Grades 1 through 9, students only need to know how their work matches up against the grade-level expectations and their own past performances. They don't need to be compared to others.

Research shows that grades have many negative effects. They diminish students' interest in what they are learning. They also discourage risk-taking, as students will select the easiest possible task so as not to jeopardize their grade. They also tend to reduce the quality of students' thinking. Students become preoccupied with whether or not a concept will be on the test rather than asking probing questions about the concept itself. No research has contradicted these findings. (Kohn, 2011).

Students will be assessed on their progress toward the attainment of the outcomes for their grade-level. They will provide evidence of their achievement through their productions, and conferences with teachers. Teachers will also collect evidence through their observations of the student's learning.

The level of student achievement will be indicated for each strand of the subject area. A strand is a group of outcomes related to one area of the curriculum for the subject. Each subject has no more than 4 strands. Students will not receive a rating for the subject as a whole. Assessing by strand gives students and parents more precise information about a student's strengths and progress in each area of the curriculum than is possible with one number.

Through the learning process, students will always be aware of the learning target, and they will receive frequent and detailed feedback on their progress toward that target. Reports will be distributed in November, March and June.

The school division is preparing common criteria for the outcomes, to ensure consistency in assessment across the division.

## STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES

Student-Led Conferences, which take the place of the traditional “Parent-Teacher Interviews”, are used as a further means of communicating student progress. During your scheduled time, your child will highlight exemplary work, and share items from his/her learning portfolio.

All conferences will be 15 minutes in length. If more time is required, you will have to make another appointment. Student-Led Conferences are held in November and March of each year. Parents will be notified with specific dates and times.

## **STUDENT AWARDS**

An awards program is held at the conclusion of each school year to recognize individuals who deserve honour for their dedication and achievement in curricular and extra-curricular programs at St. Mary's School.

## **EXTRA-CURRICULAR**

Our staff, students and volunteers work hard to develop, enhance and maintain strong extracurricular programs to challenge our students to excel in sports, the arts, leadership, and service. Students have the opportunity to participate in various activities, such as: Cross Country, Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton, Track & Field, and various clubs.

## **HOUSE LEAGUES (INTRAMURALS)**

House league programs are provided for students in Grade 4 to Grade 8 during the noon break. This is an opportunity for students to become involved in high participation, low competitive events and activities.

## **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

The SRC is comprised of executive members from Grade 7 and 8. The Council provides leadership for student activities and assists the school with creating a positive school environment.

## **SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

St. Mary's School Community Council (SCC) is elected annually from parents and guardians of students enrolled in school, as well as from Catholic electors residing in St. Mary's School attendance area. The SCC serves as an important link between parents, communities, and the boards of education.

The SCC provides insight into the needs and expectations of families and supports the important work of improving student learning. The SCC plans and implements school family events, which help create strong relationships between families, staff and students.

All parents and guardians are encouraged to support the SCC by attending meetings or family events.

## **NUTRITION PROGRAM**

Community Schools provide nutrition programming

and food experiences linked to the curriculum in an effort to meet the needs of the whole child and to optimize the learning environment. St. Mary's Community School Kitchen offers:

- Breakfast for Learning (8:30 - 8:55 a.m.)
- Nutritious Snack K-3 (Morning)
- Hot Lunch (Nominal Fee)

Parents must complete a request form if they require this service.