



# Madonna Catholic Regional School

[www.madonnacatholic.com](http://www.madonnacatholic.com)

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Dear Families and Friends of Madonna Catholic Regional School,

Madonna Catholic Regional School administration and faculty are committed to teach and model Gospel values to encourage students to live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of the school strives to recognize and respect the dignity of each person and to offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment.

The school handbook has been written to provide important information concerning specific rules, policies and procedures related to the safety and operation of our schools. It serves as the primary reference source for questions about the operation of Madonna Catholic Regional School. Please understand the goal of this handbook is to help maintain an orderly, safe, and nurturing environment and make your child's educational experience both meaningful and productive.

In order for schools to operate safely and efficiently, you and your children must be familiar with and abide by the expectations, procedures and rules outlined in this handbook. It is our hope that you find this handbook helpful to you. We encourage you to print it and place it in a convenient place at home, where it can be easily referenced.

Blessings!  
Kathryn J. Miller  
Principal

*The Parent Student Handbook contains important information about our school's daily procedures, policies, and structure. Please read the entire handbook carefully. It is important that you and our students understand, accept and follow the information in this handbook. Parent and student signatures are required and indicate that you have read this handbook, understand its contents, and agree to abide by all policies and procedures.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

**All students attending Madonna Catholic Regional School will participate in Religion classes and prayer, in addition to Mass once a week as part of the Memorandum of Understanding from the Diocese of Pittsburgh**

**Please see COVID-19 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

### **SOUTH REGIONAL CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

The Bishop of Pittsburgh is the spiritual director of all the parishes in the diocese. In his capacity as Bishop of Pittsburgh he acts as the legislator for all educational institutions under his jurisdiction. As of July 1, 2020, Madonna Catholic Regional School became a member of the South Region Catholic Elementary Schools. The Director for Catholic Schools works with the Bishop, the Regional Administration and the school principals to govern all Catholic schools within the Diocese. The Host PASTOR holds authority from the Bishop and is responsible for the oversight of all forms of Catholic education in the region. The Regional Advisory Board acts as a consulting body between the Host PASTOR and the Regional Administrator. The Regional Administrator is responsible for the oversight of each of the Catholic Elementary schools within the region and works with the Director of Catholic Schools, Head Pastor, Regional Advisory Board and school principals to administer Catholic education.

### **VISION STATEMENT - DEPARTMENT FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

The Vision for the Department for Catholic Schools is to promote and to sustain Catholic Schools of unparalleled quality, which integrate faith into every aspect of life and culture, producing graduates who continually strive for human and Christian perfection.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the mission of Madonna Catholic Regional School to provide a Christ-centered community focused on Gospel values, service, and academic excellence to foster a lifelong relationship with God and the Church and to develop leaders that carry their success with kindness, respect, and responsibility.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Madonna Catholic Regional School admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs and athletic and other school-administered programs.

### **BELIEFS OF MADONNA CATHOLIC REGIONAL SCHOOL**

#### **We Believe...**

\*That each child will develop an understanding of the Catholic Faith to build a personal and ongoing relationship with God.

\*Every child can learn and reach his or her full potential.

\*Our faith community welcomes all children and families.

\*Each child's learning and faith formation builds through partnerships with families.

## **PROFILES OF A GRADUATE OF MADONNA CATHOLIC REGIONAL SCHOOL**

### **A graduate will live Gospel values by:**

- \*Worshipping regularly and participating in the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation for Catholics.
- \*Having the courage to live their faith in decision-making and evangelization of others.
- \*Demonstrating a spirit of mercy, forgiveness, and empathy.
- \*Respecting others and self as images of God with an attitude of acceptance and tolerance.
- \*Respecting life and taking responsibility for God's creation.

### **A graduate will demonstrate a call to service by:**

- \*Continuing to be an active member in the Church and participant in parish life and ministries.
- \*Realizing as a global citizen the need to work cooperatively for the good of all.
- \*Recognizing and addressing the needs of others especially the less fortunate.
- \*Internalizing and finding value in the selfless nature of volunteering.

### **A graduate will demonstrate academic excellence by:**

- \*Exhibiting literacy, competency, and effective study skills in all subject areas.
- \*Being proficient in current platforms to locate, analyze, present and share information.
- \*Showing self-motivation and responsibility for their own learning to reach their own potential.
- \*Being proficient digital citizens in the twenty-first century, learning skills by demonstrating critical thinking, effective communication, and collaboration.
- \*Expressing creativity through both the fine arts and language arts.
- \*Being prepared for high school and the opportunity for advanced placement and honors courses in both core subjects and Spanish.

## **MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION**

The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accredits Madonna Catholic Regional School. Middle States accreditation is an expression of confidence in Madonna Catholic Regional School's mission, goals and objectives, performance and resources and validates publicly the excellence in education.

The Middle States Evaluation is an ongoing process requiring the submission of updated plans every three years. After ten years the school is re-evaluated for continued accreditation. We began our reaccreditation self-study *Excellence by Design* in the Spring of 2019. A visiting team will be evaluating Madonna Catholic in Spring of 2021 or whenever possible after the pandemic restrictions have been lifted.

## **Catechetics (Faith Formation)**

Catechesis is the center of the Catholic school. A conscious effort is made to create a Christ-centered atmosphere by stressing Christian values and morality in the classroom as well as throughout the school. A deliberate attempt to integrate Catechesis into every aspect of the school curriculum is made by all faculty members.

Our belief in Jesus has drawn us to this school community. Our beliefs are expressed in and strengthened by daily communal prayer. Students develop skills and a love for the Church's daily worship. Our daily prayer includes a prayer service each morning, before each class, simple prayers before and after lunch, and at the end of the day.

An introduction each morning briefly sketches the saint or feast of the day or some aspect of the liturgical season. Attention is also given to the seasons of the year, to the anniversaries of historical figures and peacemakers of our time, and to the civil holidays that have significance for our children.

Faith experiences are an integral part of Catechesis. Opportunities for Eucharistic Liturgies, Reconciliation, Stations of

the Cross, the Rosary, and other Catholic prayers, classroom prayer and service to others are to be included. Community is at the heart of Catholic education, not simply as a concept to be learned, but as a reality to be lived.

The Principal, in conjunction with the Pastors and the Catechetical Administrators, work with the teachers in the religious development and sacramental preparation of the students. Parent Preparation Programs for Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation are held during the year at each individual parish. These are parish programs and involve all eligible children and parents of the parish.

The Catholic Church recognizes parents/guardians as the primary educators of their children. The role of the Catholic School is to supplement and complement the role of the parent. In the school, a formal catechetical program is taught daily. The Diocesan Catechetical Curriculum Guidelines, "Growing in God's Covenant" contain a balance of doctrinal content, scriptural understanding, faith formation, prayer, and worship experiences.

Goals and objectives are constant and consistent to enhance the spiritual formation and moral development of all students. A genuine, personal relationship with God and the response of worship and service are ultimate goals of the religious instruction. Liturgical and personal prayer are outcomes of the guidance and religious instruction provided. Opportunities for both communal and personal prayer are a daily priority. Careful planning and programming ensure a broad and deep understanding of authentic Church Doctrine.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM**

### **CONTINUOUS GROWTH APPROACH TO INSTRUCTION**

The Catholic Schools located within the Diocese of Pittsburgh are committed to a program of education that seeks knowledge and practice of the Catholic faith, academic excellence, moral courage, and the learning of the faith in the light of social teaching of the Church.

The Catholic School offers a strong traditional curriculum. In the "Continuous Growth Program" of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, students advance through a defined curriculum according to their individual needs and abilities. In addition to meeting all the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the curriculum gives special attention to the integration of Gospel values.

Research indicates that children will achieve according to the expectancies placed upon them by their teachers and parents. Catholic school teachers place high expectation on all children so that all children are encouraged to achieve to the best of their ability.

The goals of the Continuous Growth Program in Language Arts and Math are:

- \*To recognize and provide for differences in each student's growth patterns.
- \*To provide an environment in reading and math classes that permits and encourages continuous progress.
- \*To adapt the math and reading curriculum to each child to challenge maximum individual development.
- \*To encourage students to exert effort so that they may experience success in their encounter with each school situation.

## **ACADEMIC SUPPORT PROGRAM**

We strive to be as inclusive as possible in welcoming all students for whom we can provide an appropriate education. Therefore, we implement the Diocesan Academic Support Model to assist students who are struggling academically and/or have been identified as a person with a special need. Parents may request information from the principal or the child's teacher.

## **CURRICULUM GUIDELINES**

Curriculum Guidelines for all subject areas are utilized by the Catholic elementary schools and provided through the Department for Catholic Schools. The guidelines endeavor to guide and provide continuity to the teaching/learning process and are geared to meet the individual needs of students and to guide the teaching/learning process.

Flexible pacing is an important component of the continuous growth concept. This provision places students at an appropriate instruction level and then allows them to move forward in the curriculum as they achieve mastery of content and skills. Teachers will assess the instructional needs of students and provide differentiation through small flexible groups.

Teachers, recognizing different learning styles, vary their presentation and assignments to provide for the individual needs of each child. Critical thinking skills, problem solving, and research techniques are a part of instruction. Enrichment activities are provided for all students, to broaden lessons presented.

### **World Language**

Because the Church is universal and embraces all people, regardless of race, nationality and financial status, the Catholic school encourages the student of world languages and other cultures. World language students learn the sounds and syntax of the language and work toward proficiency in listening, speaking, reading and writing. A variety of materials and methods are used for instruction. Madonna Catholic Regional School offers Spanish in grades K-8.

### **Library**

Students at Madonna Catholic Regional School in grades 1-8 utilize the Monongahela Public Library and its resources. **AT THIS TIME, STUDENTS WILL NOT BE GOING TO THE LIBRARY.**

### **Physical Education**

Our students in Grades K-8 attend Physical Education classes at the Mon Valley YMCA. This includes one seven-week session of swimming. Students are expected to participate in all Physical Education classes, including swimming, **unless they have a physician's excuse. AT THIS TIME THE YMCA WILL BE PROVIDING GYM CLASS ONSITE.**

The health and physical education curriculums strive to establish healthy, active students so that each child can develop to his or her full potential. Students learn to respect the rights of others and to follow rules through games and physical activity. Learning to channel energies constructively helps students to develop a good self-image and to perform successfully in life.

### **Textbooks**

Madonna Catholic Regional School participates in Pennsylvania's Act 195/90 whereby the state purchases textbooks and instructional materials of non-religious items. Textbooks are selected after being reviewed by the faculty and administration to determine the connection to content curriculum. A parent form with permission to have their child use these books is kept on file in the school office. All books are to be covered. Students are responsible for the condition of the books given to them at the beginning of the year. Students will be required to pay for the book if it is damaged or lost. Books taken to and from school are to be placed in a book-bag.

### **Technology**

Technology instruction is essential in today's educational process. This instruction includes computer awareness, computer literacy and coding. When this instruction and awareness are mastered, the computer becomes a basic tool for teaching logical thinking and problem-solving, creative writing, communication, the handling of information and many other aspects of the curriculum.

Teachers look beyond hardware and develop an awareness of values such as relationships, collaboration, ethical conduct, responsibility, and creative expression. All in all, other areas of the curriculum, the integration of the Gospel values is part of the teaching/learning process in all areas of the classroom.

Teachers use a wide variety of technological devices during instruction. Students are expected to handle all equipment with great care. If any equipment should be damaged through carelessness or mischievous activities, the student and his/her family will be held financially responsible for any repair or replacement required. Damage to any computer, Chrome book, monitor, keyboard, or mouse will result in a disciplinary action and the student will be responsible for replacing the damaged equipment.

Madonna Catholic provides a myriad of technology experiences to our students and we are proud to be able to implement a 1:1 Chrome book initiative for the 2020-2021 school year. Please read the Chromebook Use Agreement and sign the required forms provided to you.

## **Internet Use Policy**

### **Guidelines for Implementation and Practice**

This guideline was established to ensure understanding and application of Madonna Catholic Regional School's Internet Use Policy. The school reserves the right to amend these guidelines at any time. It is understood that the administration will inform parents/guardians of any changes via the Madonna Memos. Students' parents and/or guardians are required to review these guidelines with their child/ren and complete and return the parent/guardian consent form.

Individual use of the Internet is limited and monitored carefully. If any student deliberately logs onto an inappropriate site or passes on an address for an inappropriate site to another individual, appropriate consequences will follow. These may include, but are not limited to, suspension from computer/coding class or use of computer during the class and/or an extended period of time.

### **This guideline includes, but is not limited to, the following areas:**

- \*Information and news from a wide variety of sources and research institutions
- \*Public domain and shareware software of all types
- \*Discussion groups
- \*Access to any educational institutions and libraries

### **The following actions, which are not inclusive, are considered unacceptable actions:**

- \*Placing unlawful information on the Internet
- \*Using the Internet for non-school related activities
- \*Sending messages that are likely to result in loss of the recipients work or systems
- \*Using Internet for commercial purposes
- \*Using Internet for political lobbying
- \*Sending or receiving copyrighted material without permission
- \*Plagiarism
  - \*\*Consequences for plagiarism are determined according to the significance of the assignment and the severity of the plagiarism and may include:
    - Failure of the assignment
    - Parent notification
    - Referral to administration

- \*Using the Internet to access to send or retrieve pornographic material inappropriate file text, files dangerous to the

integrity of the system, violent or threatening material or messages

\* Circumventing security measures on school or remote computers or networks

\*Vandalism

\*Falsifying one's identity

\*Using the Internet to harass another person

**An Internet Acceptable Use Agreement must be signed annually. Please find it on our website under Required Forms.**

**Cyber Bullying Act 26 of 2015** of Pennsylvania makes "Cyber harassment" a criminal offense. **Cyber harassment** includes but is not limited to disparaging statements about a child using electronic means either directly or indirectly through social media. These statements are intended to harass, annoy, or alarm a child. **Cyber bullying** complaints should be directed to law enforcement in the area in which the child lives.

## **TESTING PROGRAM**

Standardized tests, textbook tests, and teacher-made tests are administered to students throughout the year. These assessments require students to synthesize information, apply why they have learned and demonstrate their understanding of what has been taught. Other assessments are used for diagnostic purposes to drive instruction.

### **Readiness Test**

Students entering Kindergarten are administered a Readiness Test to determine school readiness.

### **Achievement Tests**

Students in grades 2-8 are administered a standardized test to measure progress from one year to another. A component of the standardized testing program is an aptitude test that helps to define the ability of a student in relationship to the results of the standardized test. If a child should be absent due to illness, every attempt will be made to enable the child to make-up the tests. However, since the tests must be mailed on the last scheduled test day, make-up testing often necessitates taking more tests daily than is ideal. To prevent this, we ask that you do not schedule trips or appointments during the time of standardized testing.

### **Writing Assessments**

Students in grades K-8 participate in a Writing Assessment. This allows students to respond to a writing prompt and to select and organize content, develop a style and follow standard conventions. Students in Grade 6-8 use a technology program during the year to provide additional opportunities for written expression. The program provides guidance on the first and subsequent drafts to allow the students to practice rewriting and learn its value.

### **ACRE Assessments**

Students in grades 5 and 8 are administered the NCEA Assessment of Catholic Religious Education (NCEA ACRE) as part of our religious education program evaluation. The assessment provides us with information about our students' Faith Knowledge, has been designed by national religious education leaders committed to high standards and achievement. The testing includes questions designed to assess students' knowledge of key religious concepts taught by Catholic schools and parish programs.

### **DIBELS**

DIBELS stands for Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills and is comprised of six measures that function as indicators of the essential skills that every child must master to become a proficient reader. The DIBELS measures are used to regularly monitor the development of early literacy and early reading skills. DIBELS was designed for use in identifying children experiencing difficulties in the acquisition of basic early

literacy skills, in order to provide support early and prevent the occurrence of later reading difficulties. The test is given to students in grades K-5 three times a year.

## **AUXILIARY SERVICES**

The following services are offered through the Intermediate Unit 1:

### **Remedial Reading and Math (Title I)**

The Title I program is designed to provide additional assistance to students who are not demonstrating grade level proficiency in reading and/or math. Funding for these services comes through the local public-school district. Referrals for the program are based on teacher referrals, standardized test results, and parent approval. Alternate strategies are planned for students in accordance with individual instructional goals and in support of the classroom curriculum to help students develop mastery of basic skills.

### **ACT 89 SERVICES**

Intermediate Unit personnel work with and provide support to students in remedial math and reading. These teachers, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, identify educational needs and design educational interventions and strategies to help a child succeed

### **Speech/Language**

Speech and language services are also provided through Act 89 funding. This is a special service offered to students to enhance communication skills that directly impact social and academic interactions.

### **Testing Options**

Psychological testing to determine a learning disability is available by parent request or at the recommendation of the teacher in consultation with the Principal. Such testing is done through the **local school district where the student resides**. Results are formally reported to parents, Principal, and teachers with a list of recommendations.

### **Guidance/Counseling**

A certified school guidance counselor provides individual and small group counseling sessions to children in grades K-8. Children are referred by parents, Principal, teacher, and through self-referral. Individual counseling requires parent permission.

### **Academic Support Program**

Madonna Catholic Regional School participates in the Diocesan Academic Support Program. We attempt to meet the needs of all our students including those with special needs. Our faculty strives to provide early intervention and to adapt curriculum appropriately for all students. A Growth Plan is written by teachers and input from parents through conferencing is encouraged. Our instructional support team includes the Principal, Academic Support Coordinator, the classroom teacher, and Educational Specialist from the Intermediate Unit, as well as the parents.

### **Student Assistance Program**

Act 211 of 1990 mandates the Student Assistance Program (E-SAP) in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It is a comprehensive program of prevention, intervention, and support for students in grades K-12. The members of the Team are the Principal and faculty members of the school who have received special training through approved agencies.

The program exists to promote the growth and development of the child. The team members work with students who are experiencing behavior difficulties which impact their social, emotional, and educational progress.

Faculty and/or parents make referrals for the program. Once the Team has received a referral, classroom teachers



are asked to complete a form that helps identify the behaviors. The Team then makes informed assumptions as to what is needed to help the student, conveys this information to classroom teachers, parents/guardians and evaluates the results. If necessary, after consultation with parents, appropriate referrals are made to outside agencies.

Team members must maintain all information regarding students and their families under safeguard of privacy and confidentiality. Access is limited to those who have a legitimate educational interest.

## **CURRICULAR RELATED**

### **AT THIS TIME NO ASSEMBLIES OR FIELD TRIPS WILL TAKE PLACE UNLESS VIRTUAL**

#### **Assemblies**

Assemblies are held for children throughout the school year. The assemblies are planned in conjunction with the Principal and faculty with a focus on education.

#### **Field trips**

Field trips that enhance and/or augment the curriculum may be permitted during the year. Each student must have a signed permission slip before he/she is permitted to participate. A fee may be assessed to cover costs associated with the field trip. Ringgold School District will provide transportation for our field trips. Field trips are privileges for learning which may be denied to any student at the discretion of the Principal and teacher. **Students may not be permitted to attend field trips if an outstanding tuition balanced has been accrued.**

#### **Homework**

A reasonable amount of homework, according to grade level, is of great educational value and so is assigned every day. Assignments are not always written. Study and memory work are frequently assigned.

### **AT THIS TIME, MINIMAL HOMEWORK WILL BE GIVEN**

Homework is assigned on a regular basis to:

- Enrich school experiences
- Provide practice and review
- Develop good study habits
- Teach responsibility
- Foster originality

#### **Parents can assist students with home assignments in the following ways:**

\*Provide a quiet spot away from the television, telephone, or other distracting elements.

\*Check to see what was accomplished during the designated study time regarding completeness, neatness, and correctness.

\*Be willing to listen to reading, spelling, and math facts and to explain procedures, **but never to do the assignment.**

\*Consult the teacher if the child uses the excuse "no homework" too often.

\*Be sure to sign up for your child's teacher remind app or class dojo to receive homework updates

If for some reason the child cannot complete an assignment, the parent should inform the teacher by a written note stating the reason. Arrangements should be made as soon as possible to make up incomplete assignments.

The Diocese recommends the following time schedule for home study:

Primary (Grades 1-3) 10-30 minutes

Intermediate (Grades 4-5) 40-60 minutes

Upper Elementary (Grades 6-8) 70-90 minutes

At the discretion of the teacher, homework is not generally assigned on weekends.

### **School Supplies**

For the convenience of families, a supply list is posted on the school website. Students provide their own supplies and are expected to comply with individual teacher requirements throughout the school year. Students are not permitted to carry their backpacks to and from class.

**AT THIS TIME, NO STUDENT WILL HAVE ACCESS TO A LOCKER. A REQUEST FOR A 13X13 CRATE TO KEEP THEIR SUPPLIES IN NEXT TO THEIR DESK HAS BEEN ADDED TO EACH SUPPLY LIST.**

### **GRADING SCALE**

A=93-100

B=85-92

C=75-84

D=70-74

E=0-69

### **Honor Roll**

Honor Roll is a special recognition many of our Middle School students receive for achieving exceptional grades during a nine-week period. At Madonna Catholic Regional School, we encourage every student to achieve their best, and are proud of our students when they earn this honor.

The purpose of Honor Roll is to acknowledge students who receive above average grades in all subjects. While academics are important, the development of a students' character is just as important at our school. If a student receives two or more "Needs Improvement" symbols on the Character Development Chart, he/she will not be considered for honor roll.

## **DAILY PRACTICES AND POLICIES**

**AT THIS TIME NO ONE WILL BE PERMITTED TO ENTER THE MAIN PART OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING**

**SECURITY REMINDER: If you are volunteering, picking up or dropping off your child/ren, or dropping something off for your child, please see the secretary or receptionist. Please do not go to your child's classroom or walk in the hallways.**

### **Admissions and Registration Policies**

Madonna Catholic Regional School admits students of any race or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to all students formally accepted into the school. We do not discriminate based on race or national or ethnic origin in the administration of our educational policies, admission policies, athletic or other school administered programs. Children who are not Catholic are expected to participate in religion classes and to attend all religious functions of the school.

A student entering Kindergarten must be five years of age by September 1. Official certificates of birth and baptism are required at the time of registration. Students entering Grade 1 are required to take a readiness test and must be six years of age by September 1. Those registering for grades 1-8 must fulfill the age requirement for the desired grade. A mini-battery assessment will be administered to all new students to verify placement. Grade level and academic group determinations are made based on school records. Immunization records must be complete before any child may enter school unless a Vaccine Exemption Form is filed with the nurse

### **Attendance and Absence**

**AT THIS TIME STUDENTS WHO ARE AT HOME BUT ARE ASYMPTOMATIC WILL BE PERMITTED TO LOG INTO THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM AFTER THREE MISSED DAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN CLASS, UNLESS OTHER ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE PRINCIPAL. THEY WILL NOT BE MARKED ABSENT.**

Regular attendance at school is a major factor in determining academic success. Parents and guardians of students who acquire excessive absences may be required to provide documentation from a physician indicating that the absences are related to an existing medical condition. Please see the revised Pennsylvania laws concerning attendance on the school website.

Parents should call the school office and/or leave a message to let the school know your child will be absent. Kindly report your child's absence by 9am. While messaging your child's homeroom teacher is appreciated, all calls regarding attendance must go through the office. Homework requests can be left at that time as well to give teachers ample time to get assignments ready.

Absences from school are defined as either Excused or Unexcused according to guidelines from the Pennsylvania School Code. A student is responsible for making up work when absent from school and for completing satisfactorily the courses of study prescribed by the State and the Department of Catholic Schools.

**A written note must be sent to the classroom teacher on the day your child returns to school explaining the reason for the absence and the date(s) which they were not in school. If this excuse is not submitted within three days following the absence, your child will receive an unexcused absence. Students with 3 or more unexcused absences per quarter will be considered truant. Those students who miss 10 or more excused or unexcused absences per quarter will be considered habitually truant.**

***According to the Pennsylvania School Code, 24 13-1326-13-1354 Compulsory School Attendance, Unlawful Absences, and School Attendance Improvement Conferences state that "Schools and nonpublic schools are responsible for monitoring and maintaining accurate records of the attendance of all enrolled students. For a student enrolled in a nonpublic school, the student's school district of residence remains responsible for complying with the authorities and obligations related to enforcing compulsory attendance laws. Nonpublic schools must coordinate with and report students' absences to the relevant resident school district(s) throughout the school year."***

**A written note should be given to the teacher/principal for the following reasons:**

- \*Following an absence
- \*Excuse from gym class
- \*Out of school appointments
- \*Funerals
- \*Vacation
- \*Change in dismissal
- \*Early dismissal\*\*

**\*\*A phone call to the office is required for any change in dismissal in the event a written note was not previously sent.**

### **The Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP)**

Schools are required to notify the parent/guardian regarding the need for a school-family conference upon the third unlawful student absence, or truant or habitually truant students. The school-family conference engages all participants involved in the student's life to explore possible solutions to increase the student's school attendance.

The purpose of the school-family conference is to discuss the cause(s) of truancy and to develop a mutually agreed-upon plan to assure regular school attendance. The school-family conference provides both parties with the opportunity to identify, understand and explore all issues contributing to the student's truant behavior. Participation by the student and family is an integral component for this conference. In addition, representatives from relevant and/or involved community-based agencies, community and school services, and school personnel should be invited to participate. During the school-family conference a Truancy Elimination Plan (TEP) shall be developed cooperatively with the student and other participants.

The State guidelines also permit Excused Absence for Educational Trips if an Education Trip note is sent to the school three (3) days prior to the dates of the trip. If no prior form is received, the absence is classified as Unexcused, and work cannot be made up. The policy is that work will be given upon return to school and not prior.

**\*\*Any student traveling to a restricted state as mandated by the Department of Health must quarantine upon return to Pennsylvania (Virtual Learning may begin after three days).**

### **Tardiness**

Madonna Catholic Regional School requires all students to be prompt at the beginning of the school day. We believe that consistent tardiness not only disrupts classroom procedures, but also creates a negative impact on the student's general welfare and development.

Students should arrive no earlier than 8:00 A.M. and no later than 8:30 A.M. Students are considered tardy if they report to school after 8:30 A.M. He/she must report to the office with a written excuse upon arrival. The process for determining whether tardiness to school is excused or unexcused is identical to that for excused and unexcused absences.

If a child arrives after 10:30 A.M., he/she will be considered absent for ½ day. If a child leaves before 1:30 P.M., he/she will be considered absent for ½ day.

### **Wellness Policy**

Madonna Catholic Regional School adheres to the Diocese of Pittsburgh Wellness Policy. For all school parties and events, including birthdays, parents are encouraged to provide healthy snacks. Consideration must be given to students with allergies. Some form of communication with the homeroom teacher should occur before a birthday treat is sent to school. Our Wellness Policy can be found on our website.

### **Cafeteria**

The cafeteria is operated in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, age, handicap, religion, or national origin.

Madonna Catholic Regional School participates in the National School Lunch Program to provide nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or free breakfast and lunch to children each full day of school. Lunches are \$3.00 per day or \$15 a week. Breakfast is \$1.00. All students must bring or buy a lunch. Those bringing lunch may purchase milk. **"Fast Food", coffee and coffee type drinks, energy drinks, and soft drinks (soda/pop, or any drink that contains caffeine) are not permitted and go against our Wellness Policy.** If your child forgets his/her lunch, they will be permitted to buy lunch and pay for it the next day. As part of Act 39 Section 1337 of 2018, schools cannot deny a school food program meal to any student who requests one but does not have the money to pay for the meal at the time of service or in his/her account. Students cannot be punished or publicly identified or stigmatized because they have a school debt. Schools may only withhold meals from a student if they receive written direction from a parent or guardian. All communication about a student's school meal debt must be directed to parent/guardian. Those students bringing lunch may purchase milk or other drinks. **Lunches brought after 8:30 am must be left in the bin located at the front door.**

### **Recess**

Every school day, weather permitting, the students enjoy an outside break supervised by a staff member. Students are never to leave the playground area without the permission of the playground monitor. In case of illness or accident the student should report to the school office. Monitors are responsible for enforcing rules.

### **DRESS CODE**

**DURING THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR STUDENTS MAY WEAR GYM/SPIRIT WEAR (No jeans) UNTIL OCTOBER 1, 2020 AT WHICH TIME THE DRESS CODE WILL BE REVISITED.**

Madonna Catholic Regional School is a Catholic elementary school that maintains the right to establish a uniform dress code for its students. It is recognized that proper school attire and good grooming are conducive to a student's educational and social development. This Dress Code was developed:

- To promote a Christian atmosphere.
- To free children for academic concentration.
- To de-emphasize competition among children regarding clothing.
- To allow more economical dress for school.
- To provide some choice to accommodate individual differences.

This Dress Code is required of all students in all grades, Kindergarten through eighth grade. Uniforms are not required in our early childhood program. This policy is intended to maintain a standard of dress that is neat, economical, modest, and attractive.

Students are permitted to dress out of uniform on their birthday. Please remember we are a Catholic School and appropriate attire is required.

### **Spirit Days**

Unless otherwise noted, dress down days are Madonna Spirit Days and only the gym uniform or Spirit wear may be worn with jeans or gym bottoms.

### **Uniform Exchange**

The Uniform exchange program is a service that Madonna Catholic offers to all who attend the school. Using the uniform exchange is a great way to clothe your child in gently used uniforms at no cost to you. The uniforms are on display during conferences or may be browsed through by contacting the office.

**Administration reserves the right to call home if they feel your child is dressed inappropriately.  
Parents will be asked to bring in a change of clothes to the office.**

Girls	Boys
<p>Plaid jumper or culottes (must be purchased through the uniform company only-School Belles)</p> <p>Solid navy jumper</p> <p>Navy or khaki or black uniform shorts (shorts must be long enough to reach the bottom of the student's fingertips with their hands at their sides) pants or skorts. Girls may wear leggings under jumper or skort.</p> <p>(Not permitted are cargo style, corduroy, pants of color, denim, low cut, hip-huggers, baggy, saggy style, tight fitting or legging style pants or joggers)</p>	<p>Navy or khaki or black uniform shorts (shorts must be long enough to reach the bottom of the student's fingertips with their hands at their sides) and pants</p> <p>(Not permitted are cargo style, corduroy, pants of color, denim, low cut, hip-huggers, baggy, saggy style, tight fitting or legging style pants or joggers)</p>
<p>White or navy uniform shirts or blouses (must have collars)</p> <p>(Not permitted are large logo designs, lace or cut outs or appliques of any kind)</p>	<p>White or navy uniform shirts or blouses (must have collars)</p> <p>(Not permitted are large logo designs, lace or cut outs or appliques of any kind)</p>
<p>White or navy turtlenecks are permitted</p>	<p>White or navy turtlenecks are permitted</p>
<p>Navy cardigan uniform sweaters or Madonna logo sweatshirt with a polo underneath</p>	<p>Navy cardigan uniform sweaters or Madonna logo sweatshirts with a polo underneath.</p>
<p>Jacket and hooded tops or "hoodies" are not permitted. They may be worn as outerwear but must be placed in lockers upon arrival at school. Only 8<sup>th</sup> grade may wear their "specially designed" hoodies, except for on Mass days.</p> <p>Outerwear/outdoor clothing is not permitted once classes begin.</p>	<p>Jacket and hooded tops or "hoodies" are not permitted. They may be worn as outerwear but must be placed in lockers upon arrival at school. Only 8<sup>th</sup> grade may wear their "specially designed" hoodies, except for on Mass days.</p> <p>Outerwear/outdoor clothing is not permitted once classes begin.</p>
<p>Socks must be worn at all times.</p>	<p>Socks must be worn at all times.</p>
<p>Shoes should not be platforms, clogs, sandals or flip flops or crocs. Boots are permitted from November 1-April 1.</p>	<p>Shoes should not be platforms, clogs, sandals or flip flops or crocs. Boots are permitted from November 1-April 1.</p>
<p><b>Gym Days:</b> Navy or white Madonna logo T-shirts (Spirit wear is <u>not</u> permitted) are to be worn on gym days. Gym uniforms also include plain or Madonna logo navy or black shorts or sweatpants and tennis shoes. Shorts must be an <u>acceptable length</u> (as deemed by the principal) and t-shirts should not be tied, or rubber banded and should cover mid drift-sit below natural waistline.</p>	<p><b>Gym Days:</b> Navy or white Madonna logo T-shirts (Spirit wear is <u>not</u> permitted) are to be worn on gym days. Gym uniforms also include plain or Madonna logo navy or black shorts or sweatpants and tennis shoes. Shorts must be an <u>acceptable length</u> (as deemed by the principal) and t-shirts should not be tied, or rubber banded and should cover mid drift-sit below natural waistline.</p>

## **Safe Environment Program**

The **Safe Environment Policy** of the Diocese of Pittsburgh requires that all school volunteers have complete background checks prior to beginning service. Also, some training and certifications are needed. Please visit [www.diopitt.org](http://www.diopitt.org), our school website, or call the school office for complete details. **The safety of our children is always our first priority, therefore no one is able to volunteer at Madonna Catholic Regional School without being compliant.**

## **Security/Visitors**

**AT THIS TIME NO ONE WILL BE PERMITTED IN THE MAIN PART OF THE SCHOOL BUILDING AND STUDENTS WILL GO DIRECTLY TO THEIR CLASSROOM UPON ENTERING THE BUILDING AFTER THEIR HEALTH SCREENING**

All doors to the school will be closed and locked at all times. Our morning routine requires that all students, car riders or bus riders, report to the cafeteria before 8:00 am. At that time, each teacher will meet their class and escort them to their classrooms. **No one will be permitted upstairs prior to 8:00am for any reason.**

After 8:00 am, any parents and/or visitors should use the buzzer at the Chess Street door to gain entrance to the building and report directly to the reception area. For security reasons, anyone entering Madonna Catholic is to report to the office regardless of the purpose of the visit. You will be required to wear your compliant badge if you are here to volunteer for any reason. Communication with teachers and students will be handled by the school office and will be done in a manner that does not disrupt the educational process in the school.

Any articles or items to be left for a student will be left in the school office or with the secretary. This will eliminate any unnecessary interruptions to classes and instruction.

**AT THIS TIME ALL ARTICLES OR ITEMS MAY BE LEFT IN THE BIN INSIDE THE CHESS STREET DOOR.**

**At no time will any door be unlocked.**

## **DRILLS**

Fire, evacuation, weather emergency, and lockdown drills are held monthly according to Diocesan policy. Students are to remain in the absolute silence during all drills. Misconduct of any nature is to be reported to the Principal. This is a very serious offense and will be dealt with immediately. The staff will assist students in need of help.

### **Fire Drills**

Fire Drills are held monthly. Exit directions are posted in each room and are to be followed. No one - teacher, student or other personnel may remain in the building during fire drills. When the students hear the bell, they are to leave the room quickly and quietly in a single file line. Students are to remain outside until summoned back to class.

Students are to remain in absolute silence during all fire drills. Misconduct of any nature is to be reported to the Principal. Misbehavior during a fire drill is a very serious offense and will be dealt with immediately.

### **Weather Emergency Drills**

Weather emergency drills are practiced yearly. Teachers follow the policy governing weather emergencies for student safety. Students must remain silent during a weather emergency drill.

### Emergency Drills

Lockdown, evacuation, and reverse evacuation drills will be practiced on a rotating basis. Students must follow the requirements of each drill.

### School Locker Searches

School lockers are the property of Madonna Catholic Regional School. The use of the lockers is a privilege, not a right. Students shall have no expectation of privacy therein as the school retains the right to conduct both announced and unannounced locker searches. Discovery of illegal materials in a school locker may result in discipline up to and including expulsion and/or referral to appropriate authorities.

## **EMERGENCIES**

### Emergency Cards

At the beginning of each school year, parents are required to complete a Student Emergency Card. It is imperative that the school be able to reach you to inform you of illness or an emergency situation. It is also important to list the names of others who can be contacted should you be unavailable. Please keep the card updated by notifying the office of any changes during the year.

### Emergency Closings and Delays

If inclement weather or some other emergency requires that the school be delayed or closed, this information will be announced on the three major television stations, WTAE, KDKA, and WPXI as well as a phone call blast through our automated system. Because of the number of public districts represented in our school, it is important that you listen for an announcement that identifies **Madonna Catholic Regional School**. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL OR RECTORIES FOR THIS INFORMATION.

PLEASE NOTE: Because our attendance registers are legal indicators of a child's presence at the times we are in session, children who arrive late or are absent because of busing when school is in session will be marked as an Excused Tardy or Excused Absence

### Emergency Dismissals

In the event that we would be required to dismiss school early, a phone call blast will be placed through our automated system and if possible, on the same stations noted above to allow for this option.

\*Children will be dismissed as parents are notified and transportation is arranged.

When Madonna Catholic has a 2-hour delay, we will have a modified Early Childhood program as follows:

2 day 10:30 AM-1:00 PM

3/5 day-half day 10:30 AM- 1:30 PM

3 day- all day 10:30-3:00 PM

**Students who don't normally stay for lunch will need to bring a packed lunch or \$3.00 for the cafeteria.**



## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

**ALL STUDENTS MAY HAVE THEIR TEMPERATURE TAKEN BEFORE BEING ADMITTED TO THE SCHOOL. ANYONE WITH A TEMPERATURE AT OR ABOVE 100 DEGREES WILL BE ASKED TO GO HOME.**

### **School Nurse**

A Ringgold School nurse is assigned to Madonna Catholic Regional School and is available to us as needed and in emergency situations. The nurse has the following responsibilities:

- Maintain and update health records.
- Make sure all immunizations are current.
- Conduct vision and hearing screenings.
- Conduct scoliosis screening.
- Assist the school in appropriate health education.
- Contact parents/guardians if any emergencies arise.
- Make arrangements for dental and health screenings.

It is the responsibility of the parents/guardians to secure proper medical treatment as needed.

### **Illness**

It is often difficult to decide if your child should stay home from school when complaining of illness. An objective sign is an elevated temperature. It is recommended that a child be kept home from school until the temperature has remained normal (below 100°) for 24 hours.

If a child has a temperature of 100° or more, skin rash, diarrhea/vomiting, or strep throat, the child will be sent home. Parents are asked to use discretion in sending their children to school if they display any of these symptoms. Please inform the school office if your child becomes sick with a contagious illness. Notes may be sent home with the other children to warn parents of contact and incubation of some communicable diseases.

### **Accident and Injury**

In the case of accident or illness at school, parents are contacted to take the child home, to the doctor, or hospital. It is important for your child's safety and comfort, as well as the effective operation of the office that emergency information needed to locate parents is available for each child and that this information is kept up-to-date by parents. Emergency Contact Forms are available on the website under **Required Forms**.

Parents of children who have any type of physical disorder should contact the Principal or teachers to make them aware of the problem.

### **Medication**

Medication should be given at home, and physicians should be asked to change the schedule for the administration of medication so that it can be given before and after school hours.

All medications shall be administered by a registered nurse, a licensed practical nurse, or by the parent or their designee (excluding non-medical school personnel). Madonna Catholic Regional School does not have a school nurse on staff. The only exception would be emergency medication which can be self-administered, such as an epi-pen or asthma inhaler. However, when medication must be administered during school hours in an emergency situation, a written procedure for student self-administration and storage of medication is required to ensure student safety and to

mitigate any liability of the school and school personnel. NOTE: The Pennsylvania Department of Health states that school nurses should give medication only as prescribed by a physician. A legal opinion of the Pennsylvania Department of Justice states, "Except in truly emergency situations, teachers may not administer individually prescribed medications."

Students requiring a fast-acting inhaler, such as albuterol for asthma or epinephrine for life-threatening allergies may be self-administered. Students may carry their own medication and administer it during the school day as ordered by their licensed prescriber and authorized by their parent and school. An order from a licensed prescriber for the medication, including a statement that it is necessary for the student to carry the medication and that the student is capable of self-administration, is required before the student may carry the medication on his/her person. A student needing to self-carry emergency medications should have an emergency care plan or a similar form completed by their healthcare provider. Before allowing a student to self-carry medication, the nurse assigned to the school (Ringgold School District provides a nurse assigned to Madonna) will ensure that the student is competent in self-care through demonstration of administration skills and responsible behavior. The student must notify administration immediately following each use.

- When possible, school personnel should supervise the student's self-administration of medication.
- Stored medications administered by a RN, LPN or parent must be in a secure locked location. Students should never be given access to this location.
- The medication should be delivered to the school by the parent, guardian, or other responsible adult along with the treating physician's written documentation relative to the diagnosis, prescribed medication, dosage and instructions for the student's self-administration of the medication.
- Medication brought to school must be in a container labeled by a pharmacist or doctor. The label must include the student's name, the name of the physician, date of prescription, dosage, and frequency of administration.
- If the student is not carrying the epi-pen or inhaler, a specific staff member should be given the responsibility of distributing medication to students for self-medication.

\*A record book must be maintained indicating the student's name, the name of the medication, the date and time of distribution to the student for self-medication, and the identity of the person distributing medication to the student for self-medication. This record must be marked every time medication is dispensed.

### **Telephone/Cell Phones**

No child is permitted to use any phone, including cell phones, except for emergencies. Forgotten homework, books, lunches, musical instruments, swim bags, or changes in afternoon plans do not necessarily constitute emergencies and are not sufficient cause to call home. In all cases, the office will make the phone calls home. Permission to use the office telephone must be obtained from the school secretary after the student has received permission from his/her teacher.

**All cell phones and SMART watches must be powered down upon arrival at school and be kept in a book bag or locker AT ALL TIMES. At no time during the day (including homeroom and lunch) should a cell phone or SMART watch be in a student's possession. Possession of cellular phones or SMART watches at inappropriate times warrants confiscation by teachers and/or administrators.**

**If student is found with a cell phone or smart watch:**

**\*First time:** Cell phone/SMART watch will be turned into the office and the student may retrieve it from the Principal at the end of the day

**\*Second time:** Cell phone/SMART watch will be turned into office. A parent must come to the office between 8:00 and 3:30 to retrieve the phone.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

It is important that we know the ordinary means by which each child arrives and departs daily. A note is to be sent when a change is necessary. For reasons of safety and insurance, each child is to ride his/her assigned bus.

### **Bus**

Students who live more than a 10-mile radius from Madonna Catholic Regional School are eligible to be bused to the school. Those who live along a route that has been declared "hazardous" are also eligible for busing. The Board of Education Transportation Division determines "hazardous route" claims. The student transportation policies and procedures of the local educational agencies responsible for busing students are applicable to all students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Students are expected to maintain appropriate behavior while in route on the bus. Every bus follows the guidelines that are within our own discipline code. Students are expected to remain in their seats at all times. This ensures their safety and the safety of others.

If improper conduct occurs, the driver prepares a report that is sent home to alert the parents to the problem. If the behavior persists, the bus company has the right to ask the school district to suspend the student's privilege of riding the bus, temporarily or permanently. This will result in the student's losing bus privileges. The parent will then be responsible to make other arrangements for transportation.

### **Car Riders/Walkers Arrival and Dismissal**

**AT THIS TIME ALL STUDENTS WILL REPORT DIRECTLY TO THEIR CLASSROOMS.  
WALKERS AND CAR RIDERS WILL ENTER THROUGH THE CHESS STREET DOOR. BUS RIDERS WILL ENTER THROUGH THE CHESS STREET DOOR**

## **STUDENT ACTIVITIES**

**AT THIS TIME, ALL ACTIVITIES MAY BE MODIFIED**

### **Altar Servers**

Students in grades 4 - 8 have the privilege of serving on the altar. Students who choose this privilege are expected to fulfill assigned responsibilities and to be on time.

### **Liturgies-DURING THIS TIME, GRADES WILL ATTEND MASS ON A ROTATING SCHEDULE**

Students in grades K-8 attend Mass once a week on Friday at 10:00AM and on Holy Days of Obligation with the parish whenever Mass is scheduled. Mass attendance and participation is an expectation of all students.

### **Athletics**

Athletics is offered for students in grades 2-8 to participate in the Diocesan Leagues. Boys and Girls Basketball,

Girls Volleyball, and Cheerleading are currently offered. The Varsity teams are composed of students in grades 7 and 8, and the Junior Varsity students from grades 5 and 6. Grades 2-4 are part of the Developmental programs.

**Instrumental Music (AT THIS TIME THERE WILL BE NO DIOCESAN BAND INSTRUCTION. BAND PARTICIPATION WILL BE REVISITED IN JANUARY)**

Band instruction is available for a fee for interested students in grades 4-8. The Diocesan Program dictates the monthly fee annually. The instruments are rented with the option to buy. Small group lessons are provided one period a week and practice is held once a week. The periods are rotated so the same classes are not missed too often. However, it remains the responsibility of the student to make up missed work.

A meeting is held at the beginning of each school year to provide more information for interested parents.

**Clubs**

A variety of clubs are held after school to peak your child's interest in wholesome activities. Examples include: MathCounts, PJAS, Drama, English Fest and Leadership.

**Extracurricular Activities**

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege, not a right. In order to participate in any and all extracurricular activities, academic success and our Code of Conduct must be the priority of the student. Students are reminded that participation in extracurricular activities can be affected by not following the Code of Conduct or maintaining their school work. The Code of Conduct can be found at the back of the Parent Student Handbook on our website.

**Service Hours**

All students in grades 6-8 at Madonna Catholic Regional school are required to do community service totaling 15 hours per year. Ample opportunity is given during the school year, however hours can be completed outside of school and verified by a responsible adult. **Failure to complete service hours will affect your Religion grade for the last 9 weeks. A service hour log form can be found on our website under Required Forms.**

**Party Invitations**

Please do not send party invitations to school to be distributed for your child's birthday. This may cause hurt feelings among the students who are not invited. The only exception to this policy is if every boy or every girl, or all students in your child's room are invited

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

**Transfers**

When a student transfers to another school, parents should notify the school office as soon as possible. Academic records will **not** be forwarded until all financial obligations to the school have been met.

**Tuition**

Parents who register a student in the school enter a contractual obligation with the school. Madonna Catholic Regional School partners with Smart Tuition for the processing and collection of tuition and fees. You must register at [www.enrollwithsmart.com](http://www.enrollwithsmart.com) and pick one of the payment plans offered. Parents are reminded that the operational budget of the school is dependent on timely fulfillment of this obligation. Parents whose tuition is in arrears will receive a notice indicating the past due amount. **Major field trips, registration for the next school year, final grades, and transfer of academic records will not be processed if there is an outstanding balance.**

**Scholarship Monies**

Scholarship monies are available for eligible families. The FACTS Grant and Aid Assessment application is used. An

independent evaluator assesses these applications. This one application is used for Scholastic Opportunities Scholarships, Bishop's Education Fund and other financial aid opportunities and must be filed by March 15<sup>th</sup>. Application forms are available online at [online.factsmgt.com/aid](http://online.factsmgt.com/aid) or through a link on the school's website. Additional financial aid opportunities sometimes arise throughout the year and are made available to parents through the Madonna Memos and family folders.

### **Fundraising**

AT THIS TIME FUNDRAISING IS LIMITED. PARTICIPATION IS REQUIRED AS EVENTS ARE ABLE TO BE HELD. IN THE EVENT OF A PROLONGED CLOSURE, FUNDRAISING WILL BE DONE VIRTUALLY. AT NO TIME WILL THE ASSESSMENT BE REDUCED OR WAIVED.

The Diocesan policy for funding elementary Catholic schools calls for each school to have fundraising activities to generate at least 15% of their total operating budget. School parents are expected to participate in these fundraising activities through monetary donations, purchases and/or volunteer work. Each family is responsible for meeting a set amount called the "Fundraising Assessment" as well as to volunteer in at least two major fundraising events each year. A full menu of all fundraising opportunities is available in the school office, is distributed to all families at the beginning of the school year, and can be found on the school website.

Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the annual assessment will be billed as a "balance due" in Option C. As a family earns assessment credit it will be posted as a "payment" at the end of each fundraising event. This ensures each family has accurate and up to date information concerning their balance due. Any assessment balance unpaid on the last day of school becomes a past due tuition liability.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Thursdays will be the day of our weekly distribution of informational documents and you will receive an email through Option C when the school website has been updated. Please take the time to read these emails in order to stay informed with what is happening here at Madonna. Our monthly calendar and monthly hot lunch menu will also be posted on the school website.

Each student is required to have one take home folder that will be utilized to send home all classwork, graded work, and any flyers, fundraising information, or documents from the office that may need to be signed. Please be sure to check this folder daily. Parents may return any necessary forms in the folder to the homeroom teacher.

The Principal must approve any information or fliers that anyone may want to distribute.

Parents are informed of the student's progress and other school information as follows:

- Online grades ([www.optionc.com](http://www.optionc.com))
- Interim Reports
- Quarterly report cards
- Parent/student/teacher conferences (scheduled twice per year)
- Conferences on request
- Conduct referrals
- School Newsletter (Madonna Memos)
- Curriculum Nights/Open Houses

Option C is our online gradebook. Parents and students receive passwords and may check their progress via the Internet. Access to the online grade book may be found at [optionc.com](http://optionc.com) or through the link on our school website. Phone and email blasts are also done through Option C for updates and notifications.

The school will use Option C blasts to notify parents for cancellations, 2-hour delays and unplanned events or

important announcements.

**Any questions concerning your child should be directed to the teacher before contacting the Principal.** Please call the school office and the teacher will be notified to contact you or you may contact the teacher directly through email, REMIND or Class Dojo. Positive communication between teacher and parent is vital to our total educational program.

## **RIGHTS OF NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act gives full rights to each parent, unless the school has been provided with evidence that there is a court order, State's statute or legally binding document relating to such matters as divorce, separation or custody that specifically revokes these rights. Such an order is to be on file in the school and those persons responsible for the children are to be informed of the circumstances. Every effort is made to keep the non-custodial parent apprised of the progress of the children through reports, report cards and parent/teacher conferences.

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **Introduction**

Madonna Catholic Regional School administration and faculty are committed to teach and model Gospel values to encourage students to live their lives as a reflection of Christ. The philosophy of the school strives to recognize and respect the dignity of each person and to offer a positive, Christ-centered, safe learning environment based on the Social Teachings of the Church. Discipline is considered an element of moral guidance, not as a form of punishment.

Every teacher and staff member share the responsibility to model appropriate behavior and to support the structure necessary for learning self-discipline. Students are encouraged to assume responsibility for their actions, develop self-control, and accept responsibility and consequences for inappropriate behavior.

A Christ-centered school environment fosters the following behaviors:

1. Recognizing and fostering the uniqueness and dignity of every individual.
2. Nurturing respect in all relationships involving school and parish community.
3. Developing a sense of rights and responsibilities and commitment to the entire school and parish community.

Social skills, both interpersonal and intrapersonal, are taught, modeled, practiced, and infused into the daily life and experience of the school family.

### **Guiding Principles**

The following seven principles are the basis of Catholic Social Teachings and are the principles that guide us in all our interactions.

We believe in the life and dignity of the human person. Each person is sacred.

We believe we are called to family, community, and participation. It is our duty to support each other by our actions.

We believe that we have rights and responsibilities. Every person has the fundamental right to life and responsibility to and for one another.

We believe that we have an obligation to the poor and vulnerable. We are called to put the rights of others before our own.

We believe that we are called to care for God's creation. We are all stewards of the earth.

We believe that solidarity is our call. We are one family regardless of our differences.

We believe that workers have rights and that work has dignity. Work is a form of participating in God's creation.

## **Expectations of all students**

As a matter of safety, students are expected to behave in the following manner:

### **Before school:**

- Dress according to school dress code
- Gather in the designated area (school cafeteria if arriving before 8:15 A.M.)
- Engage in quiet conversation
- Line up quietly when dismissed from cafeteria

### **In school:**

- Walk quietly through the halls
- Use proper language always
- Follow the dress code for school days and dress up/down days
- Respect school property and the property of other students
- Have a note from their parent/guardian if they change their mode of school transportation

### **In the classroom:**

- To follow the classroom rules of each teacher
- To be responsible for submitting homework on time and making up assignments missed within a reasonable amount of time
- To have a respectful attitude toward teachers and one another
- To be responsible for appropriate supplies
- To be honest in all communications
- To use computers and school equipment appropriately
- Do not to remain in or enter a classroom at any time without a teacher or designated adult present
- Refrain from chewing gum

### **During recess:**

- Do not to reenter the building unless for an emergency
- Display good sportsmanship and exercise self-control
- Play in assigned areas only
- Stay on school grounds always
- Obey the directives of playground monitors, courteously and promptly
- Stop playing when teacher announces it is time to line up
- Line up and enter cafeteria quietly and orderly

### **During lunch(Cafeteria)**

- Remain seated until finished eating and dismissed
- Clean up, pick up all papers or scraps of food, and dispose of them properly
- Speak in conversational tone (inside voices) at all times
- Obey supervisors always and remain seated until dismissed
- Line up and exit cafeteria quietly

### **After school:**

- Follow dismissal procedures
- Walk to assigned place and wait until bus or car ride arrives
- Avoid running or playing games on school grounds

**At athletic events and assemblies:**

- To practice good sportsmanship as spectators and participants
- To show respect towards coaches, referees, and visiting teams
- To maintain an appropriate silence during special performances

**Outside school:**

- To behave responsibly off school property (if the principal is made aware of misconduct off school property of a child recognized to be a student in Madonna Catholic Regional School, parents may be contacted; however, it is important to note that the school is not responsible for student's actions that occur off school property).
- Principal will forward disciplinary notices given by public school bus drivers to parents to support the disciplinary report of the bus driver

**Bus:**

- Use only the bus and bus stop assigned
- Remained seated when bus is in motion
- Talk quietly and make no unnecessary noise
- Refrain from talking to the bus driver unless it is necessary
- Refrain from placing objects or body parts outside the windows
- Refrain from littering inside the bus or from throwing anything out of the window
- Principal will forward disciplinary notices given by public school bus drivers to parents to support the disciplinary report of the bus driver

**Fire Drill:**

- Walk quickly and quietly in a single file line
- Keep arms at sides

**Consequences**

Please be aware that any disrespect, destructive act, or inappropriate behavior will be dealt with accordingly. If an individual student does not meet his/her personal responsibility for good conduct, the school may discipline the student. The severity or repetitive nature of non-compliance to the above expectations will determine the appropriate consequences. To remediate unacceptable behavior, the following actions may be taken:

- Teacher/student conference to develop a plan for remediation
- Loss of recess
- Notification to parents
- Administrative referral
- Referral to the E-SAP Team
- Detention (before or after school)
- Denial of participation in school activities, including sports
- School probation
- Suspension

Should the student receive a detention, the parent/guardian will receive a written notice and/or phone call with at least a 24-hour notice. It is in the best interest of the student that parents, teachers and administration work together for the child's academic and social development.

In the event of a serious act of misbehavior or repeated acts of misbehavior, a student may serve either an in school or out of school suspension. If misconduct continues, a student may be asked to leave the school. These decisions



rest with the administration and may be necessary for the benefit of the total program.

**The following behaviors will result in immediate administrative referrals and can result in referrals to law enforcement or other government agencies:**

- Violations of weapons policy
- Violations of the drug/alcohol policy
- Any purposeful action that results in bodily harm to another

**Suspension of a Student** (Article 603.1 in Diocesan Policy Handbook)

The Principal for a serious infraction of school regulations or for repeated detentions may temporarily suspend a student. The length of suspensions should be from one to ten days. All suspensions become effective only after the Principal meets with the parents and the parents receive a Notice of Suspension. However, no prior notice is needed if health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened. The original Notice of Suspension is kept on file in the school's office and a copy is given to the parents. This document will not only explain why the student was suspended but will also contain an agreement between the student, parents and the Principal describing the student's future cooperation in a program designed to resolve the student's problems. Student may be given in-school suspension as a warning. If infractions continue out-of-school suspension will be enforced.

**Expulsion of a Student** (Article 603.1 in Diocesan Policy Handbook)

An expulsion may be necessary for persistent and willful disregard of school rules and regulations. The following examples are illustrative but not exhaustive: chronic undesirable conduct detrimental to the physical and/or moral well-being of self or other students, continued malicious disobedience or disrespect for school authority, continued refusal by parents and/or student to comply with school policies. An expulsion may also be necessary for a single serious incident, event or situation involving disregard for, or a clear violation of school rule, or regulation. The following examples are illustrative but not exhaustive:

- Selling or using drugs or alcohol
- Violation of the weapons policy
- Physical abuse of other students or staff
- Indecent behavior
- Arson
- Theft

**Non-Violence Policy**

Verbal abuse of another student can lead to physical altercations such as pushing or hitting. This behavior, whether it is physical or verbal abuse, is contrary to the Mission and Philosophy of Madonna Catholic Regional School. Horseplay or pretend fighting is a potential for someone to get hurt. There are no degrees for this type of behavior due to the potential for harm. It is the responsibility of the administration to provide a safe environment for all students. Therefore, the following directives will be enforced in the school: If a child experiences continual harassment or bullying and is attacked, verbally or physically by another student, it is the responsibility of the attacked student to seek adult help and not to engage in the fight. The moment the attacked student reacts, it becomes a fight, and it is against school policy. At this point all parties will be penalized. All threats will be taken seriously and may result in detention, loss of privileges, suspension, and/or expulsion.

### **No Bullying Policy (Kindness is Contagious)**

At Madonna Catholic Regional School kindness is part of our curriculum, Joi Friendly, and is promoted through our *Kindness is Contagious* program. Bullying by a member of Madonna Catholic Regional School will not be tolerated. Bullying shall include but is not limited to: an intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, or a series of acts. Teachers and administration will deal with each bullying episode on an individual basis. Parents will be notified, and actions will follow.

### **Weapons Policy** (Diocesan Policy Handbook)

Madonna prohibits students from possessing and bringing weapons, dangerous instruments, and replicas of weapons (including toys) into school, onto school property, to any school-sponsored activity, and onto any public vehicle providing transportation to and from school or school related activity. Any person carrying a weapon onto school property, including, but not limited to, the school building, outdoor facilities, vehicle used to transport students, or to any school related activities poses a clear and present danger to other students and staff. Such a person in possession of a weapon violates state criminal statutes and school regulations, and shall be subject to the following discipline and penalty:

- Parents will be immediately notified
- The local police will be called
- Student will be expelled.
- The Principal and Superintendent may recommend modifications of such expulsion requirement on a case-by-case basis.

### **Athletic Eligibility Rules**

Participating in the Madonna Catholic Regional School athletic program is a privilege, not a right. Students earn the privilege of participating through hard work, dedication, desire, and self-discipline. The school, in cooperation with the students and parents, will make a reasonable effort to hold participating students to personal, academic, and discipline standards. Students, athletes, spectators, coaches, and instructors represent the school, and they are expected to be worthy representatives.

When students choose to become a MCERS athlete, they must accept responsibility for their behaviors. If a student receives 40 demerits during a 9-week period, he or she will not be able to participate in the subsequent game as well as fulfilling an after-school detention. The student must remain demerit free during this period. Attendance at practice and games at this time is at the discretion at the coach. If a student earns 50 demerits during a 9-week period, they will be removed from the team.

### **SCHOOL ATTENDANCE**

**A student who is absent from school for illness or who leaves during the school day for illness may not participate in the day's athletic practice or games.**

# Code of Conduct

## Madonna Catholic Regional Middle School Code of Conduct Expectations

- Participation during Daily Prayer and Mass
- Be prepared for class with all necessary materials
- Arrive to class on time
- Leave unnecessary, distracting, or valuable items at home
- Move through the building in an orderly and quiet manner
- Leave the cafeteria area clean when you are finished and follow all cafeteria rules
- Follow school dress code
- Follow school rules
- Follow classroom rules
- Treat faculty and staff with respect
- Treat other students with respect
- Treat school property with respect
- Use appropriate language

Some behaviors need to be acknowledged and talked about. If the behavior ceases, no further action needs to be taken.

## Discipline Report

The authority for suspensions and expulsions rests with the principal and pastor in consultation with the Department of Catholic Schools.

In order to create a positive learning environment at Madonna Catholic Regional School, a demerit system will be used to address inappropriate behavior. Listed below are the consequences for negative behaviors. Demerits may be issued by any school employee.

Half of the demerits earned each 9 weeks will be rounded and carried over to the next 9-week period. Once a student reaches 5 demerits, he/she will receive an afterschool detention. If a student earns 10 demerits, he/she they will lose all extracurricular activities-including sports-for the entire 9 weeks.

**Disruptive behavior:** This is including, but not limited to behavior that the teacher deems distracting to the teacher, the student, or the class; any disrespectful behavior

**Dangerous or injurious behavior:** This is including, but not limited to, behavior that the school employee deems potentially dangerous or harmful to the student or other students (physical or emotional)

**Immoral behavior:** This is including, but not limited, to behavior that the school employee deems Biblically inappropriate language or actions.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Employee Issuing Demerits: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

Demerits this Infraction: \_\_\_\_\_ Demerits carried over: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Demerits this Quarter: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Infraction List</b>	<b>Consequence and Demerits</b>
Skips class	5 Automatic detention or suspension
Intentionally physically harms another	5 Automatic detention or suspension
Cheating on a test or intentional plagiarism	5 Automatic detention or suspension
Fighting (Initiating or participating)	5 Automatic detention or suspension
Harassment / intimidation / ostracizing of others	4
Disrespect for teachers/staff/students	4
Obscenity (language or gestures)	4
Destruction of school property: classrooms, halls, gym, locker rooms, cafeteria	4
Cheating or copying homework	3
Name calling, teasing, rumors, gossiping	3
Use of Technology- computers and iPad- for purposes other than schoolwork	2
Use of a cell phone, Smart Watch, from 8:00am –3:00pm	
First Warning	2 Student must retrieve from teacher.
Second Warning	3 Parent must pick up in the office.
Class disruption	2
Horseplay in school	2
Passing/writing notes	2
Late for class	2
Unprepared for class	1
Failure to return signed Demerit Form by the next school day	1
Chewing gum in school	1
Other	TBD

**\*ELASTIC CLAUSE**

Because it is impossible to foresee all problems that arise, this clause empowers the administration and faculty to take disciplinary action for any behavior that violates the spirit and philosophy of the school even though it is not specified in the Discipline Policy.

The Principal is the final recourse in all-disciplinary situations and may waive any regulation for just cause, at his or her discretion.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

The basic principles of the philosophy of a Catholic School flow from the obligations of parents to be the primary educators of their children. To fulfill this responsibility, the parent must become the educational partner with the school.

As partners in the educational process at Madonna Catholic Regional School, we ask families to:

- Have clear understanding of the philosophy of our Catholic School.
- Have a working knowledge and commitment to the philosophy of Madonna Catholic.
- Establish mutual cooperation concerning all aspects of their child's education.
- Provide home experiences that will complement, reinforce, and extend the formal religious and academic instruction received in school.
- Actively participate in school activities and fundraisers.
- Meet all financial obligations to the school.

### **Athletic Association**

All sport programs are the responsibility of the Principal. The Athletic Director is accountable to the Principal. Coaches are selected by the Athletic Director and approved by Principal and serve on a volunteer basis. The Diocesan Guidelines for Elementary Catholic Schools Sports programs guide the policies. Parent interest and willingness to serve on the Athletic Association are vital to the continued success of the program, but all school associations and advisory boards are under the supervision of the Principal.

### **PTO (Parent/Teacher Organization)**

The PTO is intended to provide opportunities for parents to fulfill their God given role as educators and to give mutual support through collaboration with the school. The membership consists of friends and family of Madonna Catholic Regional School who have a vested interest in the viability of Catholic education in the Mid-Mon Valley.

### **Volunteers**

The help of volunteers is always needed in the school and at school-sponsored events. Please consider using some of your time and talent to help enhance our quality program. All volunteers must be compliant with the **Diocesan Safe Environment Policy** (see above) and will receive an ID badge indicating such compliance. At Madonna Catholic Regional School, parents play an integral role in the education of their children through PTO, Advancement Team, athletics, fundraising activities, and lunchroom volunteers. This partnership is invaluable to the success of our school.

### **Advancement**

We have an open Advancement team who devotes their time and talents to ensuring MCERS is achieving our mission to provide a Christ-centered community focused on Gospel values, service, and academic excellence in school as well as in the community.

## **RIGHT TO AMEND**

Madonna Catholic Regional School reserves the right to amend the Parent-Student Handbook at any time. Parents will be given prompt notice of any amendment.