The Student Handbook and Code of Conduct

Guide for Secondary School Students

School Year 2019-2020

St. Mary’s County Public Schools
NOW Online

http://www.smcps.org/handbook

SMCPS main page
The Department of Student Services
Parent Resources
Student Resources

Want a printed copy? Contact your school administrator.
Student Handbook & Code of Conduct

Know your rights and responsibilities

- Attendance
- Student Welfare
- Rights & Responsibilities
- Code of Conduct
Attendance Matters
ATTENDANCE

Every child who resides in St. Mary’s County and is 5 or older and under 18 must attend school regularly.

Regular Attendance
- Academic success
- Participation
- Greater understanding

Unlawful or Excessive Absences
- Poor/failing grades
- Retention
- Ineligible for activities

Talk to:
- your teacher
- your counselor
- your pupil personnel worker

Need help?
WHAT IS A LAWFUL ABSENCE?

- Death in the immediate family
- Student illness (a physician’s note may be required)
- Pregnant and parenting student
- Court summons
- Hazardous weather conditions
- Work (approved or sponsored by the school)
- Observance of a religious holiday
- State of emergency
- Suspension
- Lack of authorized transportation
- Other emergencies or circumstances as determined by the principal
Absences for any reason other than those listed as lawful.

Family vacation absences are unlawful (exceptional circumstances may be reviewed by the principal/designee).
MAKE-UP WORK

If you are absent from school, you should request make-up work.

**Lawful Absence**
- may receive full credit
- allowed to make up assignments, take alternative exams and tests
- five (5) school days to turn in completed assignments

**Unlawful Absence**
- may forfeit the opportunity to earn credit
ALL ABSENCES MUST BE DOCUMENTED WITH A REASON

Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) can notify the school by-

● phone
● email
● school website portal
● written note

No documentation within three (3) days = UNLAWFUL
EXCESSIVE ABSENCES

Absent 25 days or more?

Responses may include:

- referral to the Pupil Services Team (PST)
- retention for the following year
- withholding credit for opportunity to learn and master grade level skills and/or course content
Tardy for School

Present documentation stating reason for tardiness or have your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) sign you in.

Tardies are marked either lawful or unlawful.

Missing the bus or running late is marked UNLAWFUL.
Student Welfare

- Medication at School
- Playing sports
Do You Require Medication at School?

Your parent/legal guardian must:

- provide Medication Authorization Form (PS 109) completed by physician and signed by physician and parent
- give form (PS 109) and medication in original pharmacy container to nurse
- immediately notify school nurse of any medication changes
- pick up unused or discontinued medication from the school nurse

Students must NEVER bring medication to school (this includes over-the-counter medication such as Tylenol, aspirin, etc.)
Are you eligible to play sports?

Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0 or above is required

YOUR MARKING PERIOD GRADES determine your GPA

Every marking period, you can become eligible or ineligible

CAUTION

You may be INELIGIBLE for high school activities IF:

🚫 suspended from school
🚫 assigned in-school intervention
🚫 debts and fines at the end of the marking period
🚫 absent from school
Signing Out a Student

A valid photo ID is required
Rights and Responsibilities

- Dress Code
- Drug Free Schools
- Student Conduct
What Are You Wearing?

Students are expected to follow the SMCPS’ Student Dress Code.

Dress or grooming which is likely to cause the disruption of the instructional program or which creates a potential safety hazard is prohibited.
SCHOOLS ARE DRUG-FREE ZONES

SMCPS prohibits the possession, and/or use of illegal substances on school grounds.

Canine drug scans may be used to scan buildings and school grounds to protect and further ensure the safety of students.

Are you in a situation and need help? Talk to the school nurse, teacher, school counselor, or administrator to get resources.
TOBACCO-FREE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- no selling or use of tobacco or tobacco products/devices in any form
- prohibited in school buildings, on school grounds, on school buses and in vehicles
No VAPE Zone

Vaping May Cause Serious Health Risks/Consequences

E-cigarette aerosol is NOT harmless “water vapor”

E-cigarette vapor can contain harmful and potentially harmful substances:

- Nicotine
- Ultrafine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs
- Flavoreding such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to a serious lung disease
- Cancer-causing chemicals
- Heavy metals such as nickel, tin, and lead

Information provided by Center for Disease Control & Prevention
No VAPE Zone

Why Is Nicotine Unsafe for Kids, Teens, and Young Adults?

- can harm brain development
- can harm parts of the brain that control attention, learning, mood, and impulse control
- may increase risk for future addiction to other drugs

Information provided by Center for Disease Control & Prevention
Code of Conduct
Know the Consequences

204 - Tobacco or Tobacco Products

Possession, use, sale, or distribution of tobacco, tobacco products, and/or devices (e.g., cigarette lighters, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, and matches).

Level 1-3
Using/possession tobacco/e-cigarettes. First time offense.

Level 4
Repeated use/possession of tobacco/e-cigarettes.

Level 1-4
Distribution

Reporting to law enforcement is required.
Electronic Devices

What?
Cell phones, laptops, iPads, iPods, or other devices.

When can I use them?
- during the instructional school day for instructional purposes only
- with teacher knowledge

Consider this...
- may be confiscated by an administrator
- parent/legal guardian may be required to meet with an administrator
- school assumes no liability for lost, stolen, or broken devices
Using School Computers?

- Illegal activity
- Commercial for profit activities
- Invasion of other people’s files, passwords, settings
- Disruption or destruction of hardware, software
- Malicious use of the network to harass others
- Illegal installation of copyrighted software
- Access to obscene or pornographic material
Gang Activity/Disruptive Behavior

- gang activity/illegal group behavior/similar destructive behaviors
- retaliation against those who report behavior

Consider this...

- this behavior is reported to the police
- report this behavior to an adult at the school by using the “Gang-Related Incident Reporting Form.”
Bullying

- intentional negative actions by 1 or more students
- repeatedly and over time
- interfere with a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the school’s educational programs
- cyberbullying is the use of electronic communication
Sexual Harassment

- Unwanted sexual attention from students, teachers, or other adults
- It may occur once or be repeated over time

An adult needs to know so that corrective action can be taken.

Say NO

REPORT it to an adult (school counselor, teacher, parent(s)/legal guardian(s), administrator, or the Title IX designee).
Sexual Assault

- unwelcome sexual contact, either directly or through clothing
- committed by threat or by force
- without consent of the other person
- behaviors may include deliberate inappropriate touching/pinching/grabbing of a sexual nature, attempted rape, or rape.

SAY SOMETHING- Report this behavior to an adult such as your school counselor, teacher, administrator, Title IX designee, or parent(s)/legal guardian(s)

An adult will take appropriate action.
WEAPONS

- You will be reported to the police and the superintendent of schools or his/her designee immediately.
- The Gun Free School Act of 1994 and other public laws require expulsion from school for a period of not less than one calendar year.
Behaviors reported to Sheriff’s Office

- Alcohol
- Arson/Fireworks/Explosive
- Firearms, Stun Guns, Other
- Guns, Other Weapons
- Illegal Drugs/Intent to Sell
- Fighting
- Physical Attack
- Sexual Assault
- Tobacco or Tobacco Products
- Trespassing
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Gang-Related Behavior or Activity
SMILE: You might be on camera

Video and Audio recording devices may be “in use” in school or on your bus.

WHY??

• monitor behavior
• enhance safety & security
YOU MAY BE SEARCHED IF:

Principal or Assistant Principal has reasonable belief that in your possession is an item that is in violation of any federal or state law, or a SMCPS rule or regulation.

The school building, furnishings, and lockers may be searched
THINK BEFORE YOU ACT

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION MAY MEAN...

YOU CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN SPORTS

YOU CANNOT ATTEND PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

PLACEMENT IN AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM
We want you to succeed!

Have you heard of PBIS or MTSS?
- Schoolwide Behavior Expectations
- Classroom Behavior Expectations

Do you know your school’s expectations?
If you see something, SAY something.

If you see something on social media:
- Take a screen-shot and show it to an adult.
- Tell a teacher; tell an administrator; tell a school resource officer.
- Report it through our website.
- Do not like, share, or re-post. 
  Don't contribute to the rumors.

REPORT it, don't REPEAT it.
READ Your Handbook/Code of Conduct

Be informed!

You are accountable for knowing everything in it