



ST. MARY'S SPRINGS

Academy

FAQ's

*Frequently Asked
Questions*

**Home & School
Communication
Expectations**



St. Mary's Springs Academy
255 County Road K | Fond du Lac, WI 54937
920.924.0993 | www.smsacademy.org



What does SMSA leadership and faculty expect of parents, the primary educators of each child?

A. At SMSA, we value partnership with parents. Positive, honest communication is always the pathway to building trust and strong partnership between home-school. Naturally, school leaders expect parents/guardians to support school rules for students and to honor the academic calendar, integrating it with the family calendar as seamlessly as possible.

Per the Archdiocesan Policy Manual: “The Catholic Church recognizes and acknowledges the role of parents to be the primary educators of their child. As such, schools partner with parents in the formal education of the child. Schools in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee should demonstrate respect and support for parents in the education of their child. Inherent in the parents’ choice of a Catholic school for their child is the understanding and expectation that they will support the school’s mission and its commitment to the principles of Catholic values and faith formation. Parents are also expected to support and adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in the school’s handbooks and demonstrate behaviors aligned with good moral and ethical principles.”

“Parents are not permitted to interfere with the operation of the school nor display distrustful, disruptive, or harassing behaviors toward parish/school staff. Schools may develop local policies to identify potential corrective actions if parents do not support and adhere to policies and procedures outlined in the school’s handbooks. Such corrective action may include the termination of the enrollment of the parent’s child/children.”





How will teachers communicate academic standards/competencies that students are expected to demonstrate?

A. *Expectations for Parents of Students in P3 & 4K through Grade 12 are outlined below.*

- P3 & 4K** —● Teachers use daily communication via a home/school folder as a primary source of sharing learning. Teachers provide weekly newsletters to share learning targets and standards occurring within the classroom.
- Grades K-5** —● Teachers provide weekly newsletters to share learning targets and standards occurring within the classroom. Teachers use rubrics on assessments that are entered into Skyward and sent home in a home/school folder.
- Grades 6-8** —● Teachers provide weekly or monthly newsletters to share learning targets and standards occurring within the classroom. Teachers use rubrics on assessments that are entered into Skyward and sent home via the student.
- Grades 9-12** —● The HS Curriculum Guide and the syllabus for each course express academic policies and standards. The primary audience for HS teachers are their students, as they foster growth in student independence, self advocacy, and responsibility for learning. In HS, most students will have 7 or 8 teachers per semester. As such, weekly class newsletters to parents/guardians are not a part of the HS culture.

Parents are expected to check Skyward routinely (*at least 3 times monthly*) and may contact teachers at any time to discuss student progress. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held each Semester. The Annual Back to School Night is an excellent opportunity for parents/guardians to connect with faculty.



What should parents expect regarding school to home communications around student learning?

A.

Expectations for Parents of Students in P3 & 4K through Grade 12 are outlined below.

P3 & 4K



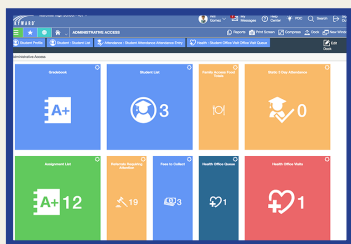
Student home folders are the primary vehicle for sharing learning progress at this level. Teachers use the Portage Guide to collect student progress data throughout the year. Semester report cards and P/T conferences are two large scale opportunities to share learning progress.

Grades K-5



Teachers will update standards-based grade books in Skyward at least weekly, with core subjects updated multiple times per week, ensuring families can see current progress toward standards throughout the trimester. Teachers are to reach out to parents if there is evidence or a pattern of challenges in the classroom.

Parents are expected to check Skyward weekly or bi-weekly. Parents may contact teachers to discuss student progress during business hours. Parents are to attend Parent-Teacher Conferences and are encouraged to schedule a conference with a teacher if necessary throughout the school year.



Parents may use Skyward to track student grades, review progress reports, monitor attendance, submit absence requests, and more. Skyward also allows parents to update emergency contact details, medical information, and personal phone numbers.

Grades 6-8—● Teachers will update standards-based grade books in Skyward at least weekly, with core subjects updated multiple times per week, ensuring families can see current progress toward standards throughout the trimester. Teachers are to reach out to parents if there is evidence or a pattern of challenges in the classroom. Parents are expected to check Skyward weekly or bi-weekly. Parents may contact teachers to discuss student progress during business hours.

Parents are to attend Parent-Teacher Conferences and are encouraged to schedule a conference with a teacher if necessary throughout the school year.

Grades 9-12—● Teachers are expected to update Skyward Grade books every six days. Parents are expected to check-in with their students directly regarding academic progress, check Skyward routinely (at least 3 times monthly) and may contact teachers at any time to discuss student progress.

Teachers are expected to communicate directly with parents/guardians if a student is at risk of failing at the academic Quarter or Semester. ALL parents are encouraged to attend Parent/Guardian-Teacher Conferences each Semester.



What should parents expect regarding school to home communications around student learning?



What resources regarding my child's learning and development can I expect from SMSA?

A.

In collaboration with Pupil Services, a multi-leveled system of support (MLSS) provides targeted academic and social emotional support based on student needs.

Students are identified for focused support and monitored through routine integrated Academic and Pupil Service meetings, including "Student Support Teaming" (SST) in the elementary school and "Supporting Our Students" (SOS) team in the high school.

Students with academic concerns with their learning journey will engage in the process of SST and/or SOS process which shall include but is not limited to the student's parent/guardian and school representatives who have knowledge of instruction and interventions provided to the students, as well as how the student responded to both instruction and interventions. School representatives may include but are not limited to: the teacher of record, the private school's pupil services professional(s) with knowledge of academic and/or social and emotional implications at the appropriate grade level. School administrators are also engaged routinely in student support strategies.

Campus Ministry supports student growth and development through retreat opportunities, liturgical experiences and community service opportunities.



A student support team (SST) helps students who face academic, behavioral, or emotional challenges so they can succeed in school.



Campus Ministry includes a yearly retreat program (Grades 9-12) and creates opportunities for students to participate in Liturgical Ministries (Grades 3-12).



What strategies does SMSA utilize to assess the individual strengths and needs of my child?

A.

Expectations for Parents of Students in P3 & 4K through Grade 12 are outlined below.

- P3 & 4K** — Opportunities for student self assessment and goal setting is introduced at this academic level. This strategy supports the students' academic journey as parents and teachers support the learning environment. Students learn about their individual learning styles, strengths and areas for growth.
- Grades K-5** — Opportunities for student self assessment and goal setting is practiced at this academic level. This strategy supports the students' academic journey as parents and teachers support the learning environment. Pupil Services works with students directly to help them identify interests, individual learning styles, strengths and areas for growth.
- Grades 6-8** — Opportunities for student self assessment and goal setting is practiced at this academic level. This strategy supports the students' academic journey as parents and teachers support the learning environment. Pupil Services works with students directly to help them identify interests, individual learning styles, strengths and areas for growth.
- Grades 9-12** — Helping students to identify and unpack their God given gifts and talents defines the vocation of Catholic school educators. Both inside and outside of the classroom, HS teachers, coaches and counselors facilitate opportunities for student reflection, self assessment, and goal setting. Building rapport along with implementing the Universal Principles of instruction helps teachers to assess student learning styles, interests, strengths and areas for growth. The school counselors work with students directly to help individuals identify interests and strengths and to map future pathways in curriculum and post-secondary options.



Parent & Family Resources
including a Skyward Tutorial,
Handbooks, Lunch Payment
and more can be found on our
school website!

smsacademy.org