



Saint Mary's Catholic Schools

www.stmarysoneill.org

Uniting learning with faith in God, and our faith in God with daily life, we joyfully proclaim: "May my soul magnify the Lord!"

August 1, 2026

It's getting to be that time again! While we're all sad to see the summer winding down, there's also excitement for a new year. We don't have many staff changes, but we do have a new Spanish teacher. Ms. Megan Homolka is originally from Chambers, and she has been teaching in Kearney, NE. She is excited to be closer to home and family, and we are thrilled to have an in-person Spanish teacher!

Open House

Our **Open House** will be held on **Monday, August 17, from 6:30–8:00 p.m.**

Students are encouraged to come meet their teachers, find their classrooms, and bring any extra school supplies that might not all fit into backpacks on the first day of school. High School students can set up their lockers at this time. Parents may also stop by the office to pick up their beginning-of-the-year folders from Miss Judy and complete any necessary paperwork before school begins.

We hope to see all of you there!

First Day of School

The **first day of school is Thursday, August 20**. We'll ease back into the school routine with a **1:30 p.m. dismissal** that day. Beginning Friday, August 21, we will follow our regular schedule of **8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

School Mass

Our first **All-School Mass** will be celebrated on **Wednesday, August 26, at 8:10 a.m.** Students should report to their classrooms as usual and will walk to church with their classmates and teachers. Parents, grandparents, and family members are always welcome to join us for Mass. We love having you celebrate with us whenever you're able.

A Few Quick Reminders

- **Flocknote:** We use **Flocknote** for immediate communication with families. Important announcements, weather-related school closings, schedule changes, and other school updates are sent through this platform. If you're new to St. Mary's, or if your email address or phone number has changed, please take a few minutes to make sure your contact information is up to date. To sign up for Flocknote, visit the St. Mary's website and select **Current Students** from the menu on the left, then click **Flocknote Sign Up**. Staying connected through Flocknote is the best way to ensure you receive important school information throughout the year.

- **School Handbook:** Please take a few minutes to review this year's handbook with your child. We ask that all handbook acknowledgment forms and beginning-of-the-year paperwork be returned promptly.
- **Attendance:** If your child will be absent or arriving late, please notify the school office as early as possible.
- **Uniforms & Grooming:** As you're getting ready for the new school year, please take a few minutes to make sure your child's uniforms and grooming meet the expectations outlined in our handbook. Summer is a great time to replace uniforms that may have become a little too short or too snug during the previous school year. As a reminder, shorts should be **mid-thigh or longer in length** and fit appropriately. Boys' hair should be **off the collar, off the ears, and above the eyebrows** before the first day of school. **A quick check before school begins helps us start the year focused on welcoming students back instead of addressing dress code and grooming issues.** Students who arrive with uniforms or hair that do not meet handbook guidelines may be asked to return home until the issue has been corrected. **Cardinal Pride Days** will continue on Fridays, and students choosing to wear shorts on those days should wear their uniform shorts. Before purchasing new uniform items, be sure to check the **Uniform Exchange** in the grade school basement—you may find exactly what you need!
- **Cell Phones & Smart Watches:** High school students will continue to turn their phones and/or smart watches in during homeroom each morning. If your high school student does not bring a phone to school, please send a note with him or her to give to the homeroom teacher.
- **Athletic Events:** As our fall activities get underway, we'd like to remind families of our expectations at school-sponsored events. School-age students are certainly welcome to enjoy the game with their friends in the student section, but parents remain responsible for supervising their children throughout the evening. We ask that students demonstrate good sportsmanship, remain in appropriate areas of the building, and represent St. Mary's in a positive manner. Your cooperation helps ensure that our athletic events remain safe and enjoyable for everyone.
- **A note about student parking:** Fr. Starman has requested that we remind all of our students to park in the parking lot across the street from the high school. Street parking (on either side of the street) **is not** available on the days that there is a funeral. Also, when students leave for a sporting event on a Saturday morning, they should park in the parking lot, and not in the street. Street parking needs to be kept available for Mass on Saturday night.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call the school office (402) 336-4455 and Miss Judy will help however she can, or send you on to me. We look forward to another amazing year at St. Mary's.

Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Pray for Us!



Paula Atkeson