

St. Mary Academy

Weapons Policy (Students)

Preface

State law requires the reporting of possession of a “dangerous weapon” to the local law enforcement agency. The law also requires that the student’s parent or guardian be notified. “Dangerous weapon” includes a firearm, dagger, dirk, stiletto, knife with a blade over 3 inches long, pocket knife opened by mechanical devise, iron bar or brass knuckles.

State law calls for permanent expulsion of a student, subject to limited reinstatement for possession of a dangerous weapon.

Definitions

- a. A **weapon** is any object which can be used to threaten or injure another. It includes but is not limited to “dangerous weapons” as defined by the State law which is included in the policy.
- b. School premises includes the school building and the adjacent grounds including but not limited to parking lot, playground, student lockers, and busses. Immediate vicinity of the school means within a block radius of the school.

Guidelines

- a. Any student discovered to be, or suspected of, carrying, possessing, concealing or transferring a weapon on school premises or in the immediate vicinity of the school shall be immediately excluded from classes pending investigation.
- b. A search can be conducted to verify the suspicion or clarify the discovery. It may include without prior warning an inspection and search of student’s person, pockets (the student empties his/her own pockets), book bags, purse, lunch container, locker, automobile, etc. Questioning of the same purposes may include questioning by the principal, a member of the administrative team, a school teacher, the pastor or a person acting in the place of any of these.
- c. When a body search is conducted it shall be in the principal’s office or other appropriate place. Such a search should be conducted by a law enforcement officer.

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- d. If the student refuses to cooperate or interferes with a search of a person or possessions or premises: s/he should be warned that refusal to cooperate without legitimate reason will result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from school.
- e. Depending on the nature of the weapon, the local police department shall be notified immediately and if possible, the student detained whenever the school has a reason to suspect a student may have a weapon or when a weapon is present on school premises.
- f. Any student found to be in violation of the school's policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion (permanent dismissal).
- g. If an injury occurs in school, on school, premises or in the immediate vicinity, as the result of a student carrying a weapon, the principal and teachers shall endeavor:
 - 1). to have students remain calm and avoid panic;
 - 2). to notify the police, the pastor of the parish/interparish school;
 - 3). to secure the school; and
 - 4). to notify and consult with the immediate supervisor or other appropriate party in the Catholic Schools Office. The Superintendent's Office will in turn notify appropriate offices in the Archdiocesan Central Services.
- h. The principal may exercise the options to keep non-school persons out of the school and/or retain students in the school until police have completed their investigation.
- i. Any student determined to have brought a firearm to school will be expelled for a period of not less than one year. The term "firearm" means:
 1. any weapon including a starter gun which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
 2. the frame or receiver of any such weapons;
 3. any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or
 4. any destructive device.