

## *To Parents:*

The following material is presented as an “*Ongoing Handbook for Student & Parents*” for the St. Mel School Extension Program. We have tried to include all information considered for the basic operation of the program, but we realize that some things may need to be modified or changed. As the year progresses, you too, may have some ideas which should be included. We welcome your suggestions, as we all work together, to make this a happy and worthwhile experience for both child and family. Please sign the last page and return.

*Sincerely,*

*Kaye De Luca :)  
Extension Director*

## **ENROLLMENT**

Enrollment in the Extension Program is initiated by contacting the Extension Director of the school. There is an initial, non-refundable registration fee payable at the time of enrollment. There are many fee options to choose from. Extension is a self-supporting program and accounts must be current to ensure on-going enrollment. Registration materials are available on the school's website.

## FEES

The Extension program is NOT subsidized by the school or parish. Fees cover the cost of the Extension program operations incurred each school day, including minimum days.

Monthly fees will be paid in ten monthly installments, just like school tuition, starting in August and ending in May. There are a total of 180 school days. The fee is charged for the total number of days in the school year, not on the number of days in any given month. There are no allowances or deductions for absences. Fees are due and payable on the first day of the month and become past due on the tenth of each month. The advantage of the monthly payment plan is it offers a significantly lower rate per hour than the Punch card or Daily Drop-In rate. Please refer to the Financial Contract Agreement and Fee Schedule for rates and options available.

Punch card hours may be pre-purchased through the Extension program. This plan works best for families that use the Extension program frequently on a drop-in basis. The Extension Director manages the recording of hours and purchasing of punch cards. For accounting purposes, billing occurs in 15 minute increments.

Your support and cooperation in making regular and timely payments will assist in the success of the Extension program and ensure your child's enrollment. If a parent fails to meet the payment schedule and does not make arrangements with the Director, your child's enrollment status will be discontinued. It is important to read and understand the policies of the Financial Contract Agreement for the St. Mel School Extension Program.

## HOURS AND DAYS OF OPERATION

The St. Mel School Extension Program is open from 7:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. every day that school is in session with the exception of:

1. On Tuesday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 (Halloween Day), Extension will close at 5:00 p.m.
2. The day before Christmas vacation begins (Friday, December 22, 2017) the entire school closes at 12:00 p.m.; however, we are open before school only.
3. On Holy Thursday, (March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018) the day before Easter vacation begins the entire school closes at 12:00 p.m.; we are open before school only.
4. On the last day of the school year (Friday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018) the Extension Program is only open before school from 7:00 – 8:00 a.m. School is dismissed at NOON.
5. In accordance with Diocesan guidelines, the Extension Program cannot be open on Teacher Inservice Days when school is not in session.

The Extension Program will be open on all other minimum days when school dismissal bell rings at NOON. For example, the first Friday of each month.

## PARKING

Upon entering and exiting St. Mel Catholic Church and school, we request that you exercise caution, slow down in the church parking lot, and use common courtesy. Please remember that a child's life is so much more important than getting to work and/or

appointments on time. Parents must escort their children to and from the Extension Program. For safety purposes, St. Mel Catholic School has requested that families using the Extension program park in designated parking spaces in the parking lot. Please do not pull up in front of the Extension building, in a parking spot or create your own parking spot in front of the stairs or put the car in park, get out of your vehicle and leave the engine running.

Unfortunately, we have had some frightening moments in the parking lot as a result of this unsafe practice.

Please do not pull up and park temporarily in front of the Extension/TK building. It creates a blind spot. The student body needs clear access while passing the Extension Program to reach the school library and computer lab in the next building as well as the cars entering and exiting the back parking lot. In addition, no one is allowed to park under the carport at any time. We realize this may be an inconvenience; however, your cooperation is truly appreciated for the safety of the students and the parishioners using the chapel.

## **SIGN IN/SIGN OUT PROCEDURES**

Please ring the Extension doorbell and an extension staff member will electronically open the pedestrian gate upstairs in the Extension-TK building. Please ask your child to practice patience while the Extension staff member does this. I know it is challenge and we try hard to be quick, attentive and cordial in our efforts to keep everyone coming and going in a safe, kind, and timely manner.

When we are in the Small Hall/Gymnasium, please ring the doorbell at the pedestrian gate down by the playground and the

inside buzzer will notify an Extension staff member someone is at the gate. When we are outside on the playground, we work hard at having a staff member at a station in order to have a visual of the parking lot-pedestrian gate. Sometimes this individual needs to attend to a student issue to get ice for first aid purposes or watch a student travel to a classroom-office. As always, thank you for your patience.

The Extension Program has a SIGN IN/SIGN OUT binder according to grade level with an individual sign in/out sheet for each student. We require each child to be signed in and out every day by a parent or guardian. Students are signed in by Extension staff after the dismissal bell rings. Upon entering and exiting the Extension Program, please make sure a member of the Extension staff is notified for safety purposes. Certain times such as snack and recess can be quite hectic and each staff member can be dealing with several issues. The Extension staff takes the safety of your child very seriously. A quick wave, making eye contact and a little tap on the shoulder is most appreciated. An Extension staff member may volunteer to do this for the parent for convenience sake.

It is important to notify Extension when another individual besides the parent/guardian will be picking up your child. We will only release your child to you or someone authorized by you in your child's emergency file.

When the dismissal bell rings at **NOON** or **3:00 p.m.** students in grades Kindergarten through Eight go to the Small Hall to check in with Extension staff and either eat lunch on minimum days or snack on regular school days. TK and Kindergartners escorted to the Small Hall by their teachers or classroom aide.

According to school policy, supervision is provided only from 7:45 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Students who are not picked up by 3:20 p.m. from the carpool will be escorted into Extension and signed in. All students need to be signed out (even for 5 minutes). Students who arrive earlier than 7:45 a.m. will also be asked by faculty to join Extension and sign in. Extension will bill individual families accordingly at the end of each month.

In the event you arrive during the school day and a staff member does not respond to the doorbell in a timely fashion, we probably can be found on the playground enjoying some outside recess time. Between the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., please access Extension through the school office as we are probably on the playground or in the school gym. Please remember to sign in first and **PUT ON A BADGE**. If it is after 4:00 p.m., please drive/walk down to the lower level gate and ring the buzzer or shake the cowbell.

## **LATE POLICY FOR PARENTS PICKING UP CHILDREN AFTER 6:00 p.m.**

We understand that unexpected traffic or an emergency can delay any of us, but please call as soon as possible to let us know you will be late. The Extension Program will provide a staff member to stay with your child at the school until you arrive. The Extension Program realizes that unforeseen circumstances do occur; however, it is not the responsibility of the Extension staff to provide free child care after 6:00 p.m.

If the Extension program does not receive a call prior to 6:00 p.m. indicating that a parent is running late, an Extension staff member will attempt to contact parents at 6:00 p.m. This provides comfort and consideration for the student and assists in the problem-solving process if wires somehow are crossed as to who is picking up.

According to the Financial Contract Agreement, the Extension program policy is to charge \$2.00 for every minute after 6:00 p.m. Time is based on the Extension program's clock. After three instances of late pickup after 6:00 p.m., parents must meet with the Extension Director and School Principal and develop a plan for timely pick up. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

## **AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON CAMPUS/OFF CAMPUS**

The Extension Program is designed to serve the student body population of St. Mel Catholic School. Please know that we try very hard to accommodate the busy schedules of the students we serve. The Extension Program is virtually an extension of the school day.

Extension students may be involved in tutoring, assisting a teacher, attending choir, play practice, athletic events, sport practices, academic meetings, altar serving, or scout meeting occurring at school are allowed to be signed out and checked back into Extension **ONLY** when attending an **ON CAMPUS** activity. It is imperative for their safety and supervision that all enrolled Extension students check in with Extension staff daily before taking part in other functions on campus or off campus. Please discuss this with your child.

If students are signed out to attend a birthday party, scouting event, sport practices or other activity occurring OFF CAMPUS, please know that in accordance with school policy a student is not able to return and check back in. The only exception is a scheduled school field trip.

If a student is off campus at a medical/dental appointment and does not return before the last school bell rings, he/she cannot be signed into the Extension Program. Please be aware of this policy when making mid-day and afternoon appointments for your children.

We hope you understand the policies regarding after school activities on campus and off campus. They may seem minor, but they are so important for the smooth and safe functioning of the Extension program and for your child's sake.

## LUNCH AND SNACK

The Extension program is only set up to provide snacks in the afternoon. At lunch, students can bring a lunch from home or purchase a Hot Lunch which is offered every day school is in session starting on Wednesday, August 16, 2017. Mrs. Terry Masten coordinates the Hot Lunch Program at St. Mel School. The Hot Lunch Menu is available on-line on the school website [www.stmelschool.org](http://www.stmelschool.org). Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the Hot Lunch program guidelines.

If you pack a lunch for your child that requires a utensil--for example, a fruit cup, pudding, or yogurt -- please send a fork or spoon inside your child's lunch box. Please remember to check the

Monthly Hot Lunch Menu and what entrée will be offered. Last year, some of the students arrived for Hot Lunch and did not like what was being served or they did not like what their parents had packed, and in both instances, would refuse to eat. In the event your child arrives at St. Mel's School without a lunch or has not purchased a Hot Lunch, the school will attempt to contact you to problem solve this situation. Additionally, on minimum days the Hot Lunch Program is not available so students need to bring a lunch from home.

Snacks will be provided to all students on a daily basis. If your child has any food allergies, please list them on the Emergency Information Sheet and inform the Director. Snack is served at 3:00 p.m. on regular school days and minimum days. Some students who have hearty appetites may want to pack additional snacks from home for extra sustenance. Regarding snacks, please know the Extension program does not serve any PEANUT products for afternoon snack. Additionally, we have some students who have allergies to certain other nuts, seeds, fruits, dairy products, eggs, and gluten. It gets real tricky when students bring in leftover snacks to share with their peers after school. Hence, why your child might come home feeling a bit blue if they were not able to share and/or receive a snack because of the requirements to read the ingredient list prior to sharing. By the time 3:00 p.m. rolls around, labels are missing sometimes. If your student has an allergy to a food product, please contact me before the first day of school and advise me if your child has an epi-pen as well. I appreciate your helpfulness and cooperation in this extremely important matter!

## HEALTH & EMERGENCY POLICIES

Parents should keep their child at home when signs of infection or illness appear. At no time will a child with a fever or contagious disease be allowed to attend the Extension Program. If your child becomes ill at Extension, we will make every effort to comfort your child and contact you. You will be requested to pick up your child or make arrangements to have your child picked up within the hour. The Extension program policy on MEDICATION coincides with the school policy. (Please see the St. Mel Parent/Student Handbook). We will notify parents if any child contracts a COMMUNICABLE DISEASE for preventative and informational reasons.

Please keep your child's emergency information up-to-date. People on the emergency form will be contacted when a parent cannot be reached in the following situations:

- \*Late Pickup
- \*Illness
- \*Accident
- \*Behavior problems
- \*Evacuation of the program

## **ACCIDENTS**

In the event of a minor injury while the student is in our care, simple first aid will be offered, consisting of rinsing the wound, ice and/or bandage will be applied. Parents will be notified when they arrive. In the event of a major injury, Extension will follow the school policy of contacting the parents and medical emergency personnel if needed along with basic first aid.

## **USE OF CELL PHONES, I-PODS, MP3'S & HAND-HELD ELECTRONIC GAMES**

Since many of our students arrive to school equipped with cell phones and other electronic devices from home, I would like to

review the expectations regarding the use of cell phones related to calling, texting, use of the camera/video component, Ipods and MP3s, game boys and other hand held electronic devices. According to school policy these items are not allowed during the school day. In Extension, we try very hard to strike a happy balance based on safety, respect for others, age-appropriateness, and fairness just like in big family. I know it would be easier to not allow some or all of these items as other after school programs do; however, in Extension we want to work in partnership with you and your child/ren. Students may use their Game Boys and other hand-held electronic devices as long as they practice inclusion, good sportsmanship, friendship, and the games are age-appropriate. Students may be connected to their Ipods and MP3 players and/or share an ear bud with a friend as long as the content is age-appropriate and it does not create an inclusion/exclusion issue with other students. Students are allowed to listen to their Ipods and MP3's during Study Hall.

The use of cell phones presents the greatest challenge. Last year, some students in grades 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> would have their cell phone out and in their hands as they walked around. They appeared empowered to make calls to whomever and whenever they wanted because their parents gave them a cell phone and it belonged to them. Cell phones with internet connection allowed students to view all kinds of different sites including, You Tube. A number of students felt the need to make phone calls to their parents several times in the course of the afternoon. Please chat with your child in regards to what constitutes a phone call to you. The Extension staff and I are mindful that, as parents, you have given your child a cell phone for their safety, their ability to

communication with others and your peace of mind knowing you can contact them and visa versa.

I am asking parents and students again to please work in partnership with us in Extension. Students will be allowed to make phone calls to their parents ONLY upon permission from an Extension staff member. Please ask your child to be respectful in their requests. Students using the camera/video component on their cell phones or accessing the Internet in Extension will have their cell phone/ipod/ipad taken away and it will be returned to the parent. During Study Hall, texting will be limited to answering a text from a parent ONLY. If the cell phone habits of a particular student become an issue, a meeting will be scheduled with the student, parents, Mrs. Nagel, and me.

## **STUDENT BELONGINGS - TOYS FROM HOME**

Students are responsible for their own backpacks, gym bags, lunch boxes and any other items brought to school. Please label all items including uniform sweatshirts, all P.E. uniform items, jackets, sport bags, backpacks and lunch bags. It helps in the recovery process. Every year there are several students who have the same backpack and lunch boxes.

Extension allows students to bring items from home as long as they do not become a menace in the after school program. Students are informed that personal items do not come out of backpacks during the school day or at snack time. Personal items are only allowed after snack on the playground at recess time. If they are brought out at any other time, more than likely the item will be confiscated. This rule is explained to the students over and over

again during the course of the school year. Please be aware that if students do bring items from home there is a real risk of items being lost or damaged. Extension is not liable/responsible for personal items brought from home. Please understand that if personal items become an issue, students will be asked to put them away and in some instances lose the privilege of having it for several days in the afternoon in Extension.

## **UNIFORM POLICY**

In accordance with St. Mel School policies, your child will need to remain in their uniform while in Extension. They may change into their P.E. uniform to save on the wear and tear of their school uniform. Please label your child's backpacks, lunch boxes, and all pieces of the school uniform, including gym shorts and sweatshirts!

Students going to soccer, dance, baseball, karate, football, volleyball, basketball, track, cross-country, and/or golf may change into their sports uniform thirty minutes before heading out the door.

The Extension staff works very hard to keep track of the students' belongings and we attempt to foster self-responsibility! We always encourage the students to put their sweatshirts in their backpacks when they get hot and take them off. Please understand that unmarked items WILL BE LOST! The official school "Lost & Found" is located in the school office in the copier room. It is a huge green plastic receptacle that is usually filled to the brim with lost uniforms! If it makes you feel any better, I am sure every parent in this school has gone through that thing at least once!

## **EXPECTATIONS & BEHAVIOR**

Our approach to behavior issues coincides with the School's policies. Being a member of the Christian community at St. Mel Catholic School and Extension program gives each student an opportunity to grow and learn, to be honest and bring a spirit of cooperation, to be respectful and responsible, and to comply with all school, classroom and Extension program rules. To maintain a professional atmosphere, we request that all staff members be treated with courtesy and respect.

Our expectations related to behavior are fairly simple and straight forward. Practice goodness and kindness in friendships, words and actions. If you don't have anything nice to say, keep it to yourself. Practice patience. It is my job to manage myself, NOT others. Practice inclusion, not exclusion. Treat others the way you would like to be treated. If your child does not necessarily like another student, we ask that he/she still be respectful to that person and their feelings and treat them fairly. We actively encourage students to participate in the problem-solving process.

Extension has implemented the **Mega Skills** character development program which embraces specific values and abilities that are considered the inner engines of learning that determine success in school and beyond. They are responsibility, teamwork, confidence, motivation, initiative, caring, problem-solving, perseverance, effort and growth. It is our hope with this character development program to motivate, recognize and reward students for their individual efforts and reinforce the school's **Student Learning Expectations**.

The following rules have been set to preserve the safety and welfare of all children in the Extension program: Please discuss them with your child.

1. Students must check in with Extension staff immediately after school.
2. Students must stay in assigned supervised areas. The school parking lot, unsupervised areas, and neighboring private property are off limits.
3. Students must have permission from the Extension staff to leave the room or supervised play area.
4. Defiance toward Extension staff is unacceptable.
5. Students are to treat each other with courtesy and respect. Teasing, name-calling, racial slurs, harassment, and intimidation will not be tolerated.
6. Students may not fight or encourage others to fight. Injury or the threat of injury to other students or staff is not permitted.
7. Students must respect and care for other's property.
8. Students in Extension must also obey the same rules of St. Mel School.

## STUDY HALL - HOMEWORK

Study Hall time will occur Monday-Thursday in Extension directly after recess for all students in grades 3 – 8<sup>th</sup> for a minimum of thirty minutes. It is the student's responsibility to acknowledge his/her homework assignment and then to use the resources available. If your child does not have homework to complete or possibly a test/quiz to study for, or a project to complete, we are requesting that he/she bring a book to read. Literacy expands minds and calms hearts. Homework help will be available; however, the

Extension personnel will be unavailable to provide one-on-one tutoring. For the benefit of all, behavior disturbances will not be tolerated in study hall. We will monitor the student's activities so they begin and work to complete assignments. We will move students if necessary from one area to another to help them focus. Please ask your child to have some sort of writing instrument in their backpack such as a pencil or ink pen. In Extension, we provide them on a daily basis; however, they seem to disappear quickly. The Extension staff does not have keys to the classrooms for forgotten homework assignments, books, gym bags, sports bags, uniforms, backpacks, and lunch containers.

When our TK, Kindergarten, First, and Second grade students return from recess in the afternoon, they will participate in a reading circle time with an Extension staff member. When homework kicks in for First and Second graders, they will have an opportunity to get started on it. Remember, good homework habits begin early! In addition, our students who are readers will have an opportunity to read quietly to themselves for ten minutes. We will coordinate with you as we recognize children are all different in their gifts and talents. Literacy takes practice!

For students who have sport practices, music lessons, athletic events, etc. we encourage them to get started on their homework at the picnic tables. Assistance will be offered when needed by either a staff member and/or fellow student. We strongly advise parents to review and make sure the homework assignments are completed in a manner that is acceptable. We realize the homework component of school can be stressful at times for our students (and parents). The Extension staff is very cognizant of this fact and work with students and parents to make sure the student is working at their potential.

## COMMUNICATION

In order to work most effectively with your child, the Extension Program promotes ongoing communication between staff and the families of the students enrolled in Extension. Please share with us any concerns or verify unusual reports coming from your child about their before/after school experience. When in doubt, check it out! The Extension staff will not hesitate to keep you informed. Good communication is a two-way street that has proven to be very rewarding for everyone involved! Please check the school's website under Extension for current newsletters, important dates, etc. Please feel free to e-mail us at [kdeluca@stmelschool.org](mailto:kdeluca@stmelschool.org).

## SUGGESTIONS, COMPLIMENTS, OR COMPLAINTS

It is the goal of the Extension Program to partner with parents and add continuity to the school day both, before and after class. It is very helpful for the staff to know of parents' preferences and concerns. We encourage you to either talk informally or request conference time to discuss any part of the program. Please do not let any upsetting circumstances go without discussion.

## ST. MEL EXTENSION PROGRAM

Acknowledgement of Receipt of  
Parent & Student On-going Handbook  
2017-2018

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

